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BY A SECULAR PRIEST.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

RIGHT REV. JOSEPH DWENGER, D. D.

BISHOP OF FORT WAYNE.

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## VOL. I.

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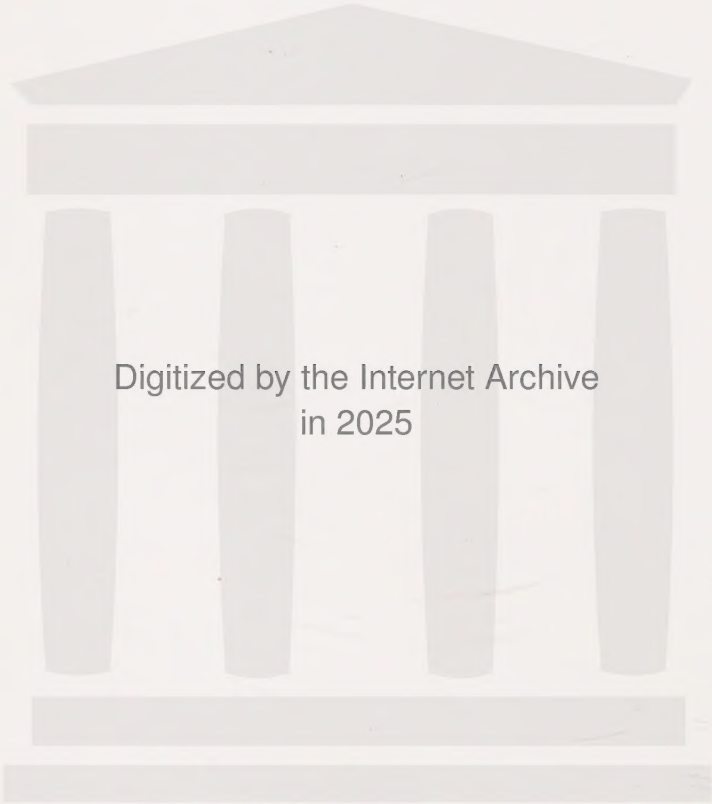

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TO THE

RIGHT REV. JOSEPH DWENGER, D. D.

BISHOP OF FORT WAYNE,

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

# INTRODUCTION.

BY RIGHT REV. BISHOP JOSEPH DWENGER.

By the divine commisson and authority given to the Apostles, "*Preach the Gospel to every creature,*" the Church was established. She continued and shall continue to the very end of time by the faithful discharge of this divine commission. Faith, the beginning and root of justification, owes its origin to it. "*Fides ex auditu.*" It has been the means of realizing the great ends of religion, the honor and glory of God, and the salvation of the human race. "*Placuit Deo per stultitiam prædicationis salvos facere credentes.*" I Cor. i, 21.

The office of the preacher is divine. Divine in its origin: "*Evangelium Dei evangelizavi vobis.*" I Cor. xi, 7. Therefore the preacher is God's legitimate agent on earth. "*Pro Christo legatione fungimur, tanquam Deo exhortante per nos,*" I Cor. v, 29. Divine in its *object*, as the word of God directs us to our eternal destiny, the union with God, preserving the just in his justification, and leading the sinner to repentance. Divine in its *results*. The history of God's people under the Old Law, still more the history of the Church under the New, corroborates the words of the Holy Ghost. "*Vivus est sermo Dei et efficax, et penetrabilior omni gladio ancipiti, et pertingens usque ad divisionem animae et spiritus, compagum quoque ac medullarum et discretor cogitationum et intentionum cordis.*" Heb. iv, 12. There is not a pastor of souls who has not experienced the full truth of these words: "*Ecce ego vobiscum sum. Qui vos audit, me audit. Non vos estis qui loquiminis, sed spiritus Patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis.*"

Convinced of this sublime dignity and utmost importance of his office, the faithful priest prepares his sermons with the greatest care, in order that "*digne et competenter*" he may announce the Gospel. And as the student of any science peruses

the means which enable him to accomplish his design, and above all consults and studies the works of the celebrated masters of the past, thus the minister of the word of God searches for means to facilitate his task; and to whom should he have recourse but to those distinguished preachers of by-gone days, whose names are embalmed in the pages of the history of the Church, of every country and nation? "*Sapientiam omnium antiquorum exquiret sapiens.*"

Prompted by this reflection, a secular clergyman of my diocese, an able and pious theologian, has undertaken the publication of a work entitled "*Reportorium Oratoris Sacri*," which professes to be a treasure of material for the pulpit, selected with the utmost care from the works of most distinguished preachers.

The plan of the work is this: Four volumes, of five hundred pages each, shall embrace over six hundred outlines of sermons, of which four hundred will be devoted to Sundays, two hundred to the principal feasts and other solemn occasions of the Ecclesiastical Year. They are so divided that each volume presents two sermons for each Sunday and Holiday of the Ecclesiastical Year.

In the choice of subjects great care has been exercised to present the greatest possible variety by giving equal attention to the dogmas, morals and liturgy of the Church.

The great number of celebrated works at his command enable the Author to suit the taste of each individual preacher, and to supply the wants of each according to the different circumstances in which he may be placed, in city or country, before every grade of intelligence, learned or illiterate. Thus as we cast a glance at the first Number, we meet the celebrated names of twenty-nine authors, such as: Marchant, Perrin, Laselve, Mazzioli, M. Taber, St. Thomas a Villanova, Querico Rossi, Tirinus, Wheeler, Haid, Houdry, Guidi, Ventura, Saulnier, Tourbé, Ehrler, etc.

I am satisfied that every priest will agree with me that the plan of the work is excellent, and by reason of the splendid selections will prove of more than ordinary benefit.

Generally the greatest difficulty for the preacher consists in

making choice of the subject of his sermon. In the "*Reportorium Oratoris Sacri*" he will have eight sermons at his disposition, which are intimately connected with the Gospel of the Day. Among these eight he undoubtedly will find one or the other which meets the present wants of his congregation and agrees with his own disposition.

The material, as ordered and regulated for the different subjects, is interwoven with quotations from Holy Scripture and the Fathers of the Church. To offer more than this to a well educated and eloquent clergy, were simply superfluous. Thus, far from slavishly imitating others, the conscientious minister of the word of God finds still a large field for his own individual originality, and for the talents bestowed upon him, fully aware of the fact that originality in the preacher is necessary for success. Wherefore the pointed remarks of Father Schouppe may also be applied to this work, when in the preface to a similar work he says: "*Res summatim tantum et quasi inchoata delineatione indicantur; nequaquam vero plene evolvuntur, neque stylo vestiuntur: haec enim proprio cujusque studio, labore et ingenio perficienda esse, nemo est qui non sentiat.*"

To one particular advantage which these volumes above others of a similar nature possess, I would invite the attention of the Rev. Clergy. They acquaint us with the productions of different nationalities on this field of Pulpit literature, and bring them within the reach of all. The productions, however, of such preachers whose works are found in the library of almost every priest, have justly been omitted in the *Reportorium*.

I hope that the "*Reportorium Oratoris Sacri*" may meet with a hearty reception, as it deserves, at the hands of the Rev. Clergy. It is in itself a small library, and will hardly be found wanting in the moments of need. A book as extensive as the present, published at the personal expense of the Author, and designed exclusively for the Reverend Clergy, depends for success upon their liberal support. Thus its continuation will depend upon the sufficient number of subscribers. The terms of subscription are low indeed, and should any balance result after

covering the expenses, it will be devoted for a praiseworthy and even necessary object.

In conclusion I may remark that the Reverend Author followed as his principal guide Rev. P. A. Scherer, a Tyrolese Benedictine, who, aided by several members of his illustrious Order, edited a work with the same scope, in eight large volumes, which, approved and recommended by many bishops, met with a hearty reception from the Clergy, going through three editions within a comparatively short space of time.

JOSEPH DWENGER, Bp. Ft. W.

Fort Wayne, Aug. 1, 1877.

## First Sunday of Advent.

### I.

### SIGNS AND PREPARATIONS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.

At the beginning and at the end of the year our Holy Mother, the Church, presents to us the scene of the final judgment. Hence the meditation on the destruction of this visible world, and of mankind is of great importance. I will therefore call your attention to the signs and preparations that are to precede the last judgment.

I. REMOTE SIGNS.

1. *The coming of Antichrist.* Antichrist means not only all enemies of Christ, but a certain individual. "Antichrist cometh, even now there are many Antichrists." I John, i, 18. A fuller description of him is given, II Thes. i, 3, 4, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth, and is lifted up against all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the Temple of God, showing himself as if he were God."

The following texts are commonly referred to Antichrist: Isa. xiv, 13 sqq; Dan. vii and viii, 23-25; I Thess. ii, 7-11; Apoc. xiii, sqq; 19, 20, and xx, 8-10; and serve to characterize Antichrist and his followers.

2. *The coming of Henoch and Elias and spread of faith.* These two prophets were translated alive from the earth and will return at the end of the world. Henoch who lived before the giving of the Law, to convert the heathen, Elias the Israelite, to convert the Jews. After having fulfilled their task, they will die, and then shall the consummation come.

Henoch pleased God and was translated into Paradise, that he may give repentance to the nations, (heathens.) Eccl. xliv, 16. Of Elias it is written: "Who art registered in the judgments of time to appease the wrath of the Lord, to reconcile the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob." Eccle. xlviii, 10. "Behold I will send you Elias the prophet, before

the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Malachias iv, 5. This mission of Elias was prefigured by John the Baptist, who preceded the first coming of Christ in the spirit and strength of Elias. Jesus himself tells us that "Elias indeed shall come and restore all things," and that by his prototype "Elias is already come." Matt. xvii, 11, 12. Both, Henoch and Elias, will give strong testimony for Jesus Christ, and will be killed by AntiChrist, to rise from death after a short time. Apoc. xi, 3-12. "And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come." Mt. xxiv, 14. In connection wherewith the words, "There shall be made one fold and one shepherd," (John x, 16,) are commonly explained.

### II. PROXIMATE SIGNS.

1. *Tribulations on earth.* "And his zeal will take armour * * and the whole world shall fight with him against the unwise. Then shafts of lightning shall go directly from the clouds; as from a bow well bent, they shall be shot out, and shall fly to the mark. And thick hail shall be cast upon them from the stone-casting wrath: the water of the sea shall rage against them; and the rivers shall run together in a terrible manner. A mighty wind shall start up against them, and as a whirlwind shall divide them; and their iniquity shall bring all the earth to a desert; and wickedness shall overthrow the thrones of the mighty. Wisdom v, 18-24. Cf Isa. xxxiv, 8, sqq. Soph. i, 14, sqq. The New Testament gives a more minute description: "And when you shall hear of wars and seditions, be not terrified; these things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet immediately. Then he said to them; nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there shall be great earthquakes in divers places, and pestilences, and famines, and terrors from heaven; and there shall be great signs, etc. Luke xxi, 9, sqq. At last conflagration of the world: "The heavens which now are, and the earth, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and per-

dition of wicked men." I Pet. iii, 7. Fear and lamentation of men: "Men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world." Luke xxi, 26.

2. *Signs in Heaven.* "And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved." Math. xxiv, 29.

All these signs in nature shall come:

As signs of divine mercy arousing the sinner to penance.

As signs of divine justice for the punishment of the hardened sinner.

3. *The Standard of the Cross of Christ.* "And then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven." Mt. xxiv, 30. It shall appear:

As token of Christ's victory.

As the key of heaven, (it is the Cross that reopened heaven, and it is our cross carried in imitation of Jesus that will open heaven to us.)

As a measure of our works, (did you perform your works for the love of Jesus Christ?)

As a reproach to all the enemies of Christ. "They shall look on him whom they pierced." John xix, 37.

III. IMMEDIATE PREPARATIONS.

1. *The bodies of the dead will rise.*

*Resurrection is beyond any doubt.* "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God." John v. 28. Cf. the vision, Ezech. xxxvii, 1. ff. "And the sea gave up the dead, that were in it, and death and hell gave up their dead, that were in them: they were judged every one according to their works." Apoc. xx, 13.

*Necessary that full justice be done.* Body and soul partakers of virtue and sin, wherefore it is just that "every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil." II Cor. v, 10.

*Unequal.* "We shall indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed." I Cor. xv, 51. The just will shine like the

sun, resembling the body of Jesus Christ. Sinners will arise in an *ignominious* body. "What things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap. For he that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall he reap corruption," etc. Gal. vi, 8.

2. *All men are summoned to appear before the tribunal of Christ.* "He shall send his angels with a trumpet, and a great voice." Mt. xxiv, 31. "I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened." Apoc. xx, 12.

3. *The wicked shall be separated from among the just.* "The Angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just." Mt. xiii, 49. "The sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Mt. xxv, 33.

There is no other standard to be judged by but sanctity and wickedness:

*Neither by difference of rank.* Death makes all equals. Dives is set on the left hand, Lazarus on the right; the last will be the first.

*Nor by equality of earthly conditions.* Men may have enjoyed, done and suffered alike; the question is not of What, but of the manner. "There will be two in the field, in the same mill, in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Mt. xxiv, 40; Luke xvii, 34. Two thieves died on the cross, one of whom will be set on the right, the other on the left. This separation will be a triumph to the just, disgrace and confusion to the sinner. See the beautiful passage: Wisd. v, 1. ff. Cf. Apoc. vi, 15, 16.

4. *Classification of the just.* The apostles, the martyrs, the bishops, the confessors, the virgins, will form as many glorious choirs. The converted souls will be set on the side of those who converted them; pastors and faithful, founders of orders and their members.

*Of the unjust.* The wicked, the proud, the avaricious, who will also be bound in bundles, will form dreadful choirs.

J. MARCHANT.

## II.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.

### I. EXAMINATION OF THE WORKS OF MAN.

1. *The most just.* Before the all-knowing judge you can neither deny nor palliate, nor offer excuse. There the sinner will hear the words once spoken to King Balthasar:

*Mane, counted.* The books are opened, all works are made manifest, all deeds counted; the sinner will remain speechless.

*Thekel, weighed in the balance.* The burden of guilt will be weighed in the balance of God's justice. Woe to us, if we shall be found wanting.

*Phares, divided.* All earthly goods and appearances being taken away, the poor sinner, in his ignominious nakedness, stands in the sight of the judge, nobody to help him. "Behold I come against thee, saith the Lord of hosts; and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will shew thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms." Nahum iii, 5.

2. *The most accurate.* Thoughts, desires, words, omissions.

*The ways of being accessory to another's sins.*

*Benefits and graces received.* The motives of your acts. "And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with lamps." Sophon. i, 12. As the remotest parts of the house are searched with lamps, so will the Lord bring to light the most secret things, every idle word, and the mite of the widow.

### II. THE SENTENCE OF THE ELECT.

"*Come.*" How pleasant to hear, after so many sufferings and disappointments in this wicked world. "Going, they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming, they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves." Ps. cxxv, 6. ff. After longing a considerable length of time for their eternal home, their desire for heaven is to be realized, whilst in their lifetime, disgusted with the pleasures of this world, they sat upon the rivers of Babylon and wept, when they remembered Sion. Ps. 136. 1 sqq.

"*Ye blessed of my Father.*" You, whom the world held in derision, and for a parable of reproach. Wisd. v, 4. Who were

made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all. I Cor. iv, 13. You are declared by my Father to be his dearest children, and as such glorified before heaven and earth. "All that shall see them shall know them, that these are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Isa. lxi, 9. Blessed all your works, sacrifices, tears, prayers, holy communions, etc.

"*Possess the kingdom.*" You were faithful members of the kingdom of God on earth, of his holy church, therefore you are worthy of the kingdom of heaven. You were faithful disciples of the Cross, wherefore you will be heirs of God and joint-heirs of Jesus Christ. You have despised the splendor of the world, therefore you shall partake of a better world. "Therefore shall they receive a kingdom of glory, and a crown of beauty, at the hand of the Lord." Wisd. v, 17. By your victorious contests you have won the celestial kingdom. "To him that shall overcome I will grant to sit with me in my throne." Apoc. iii, 21.

"*Prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" From all eternity God remembered his blessed; it is with eternal love that he loved them, and now they are to partake of the divine source of all love.

"*For I was hungry*" * * "Amen, I say unto you, as long as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." Not faith alone will save you, but faith and good works. No work shall be forgotten, for the least of your good works you shall have an exceeding great reward, because God himself, the rich and bountiful God, will be indebted to you.

III. THE SENTENCE OF THOSE ON THE LEFT.

"*Depart from me.*" Dreadful word. To have been created by God and for God, and now rejected. To be separated forever from the fountain head of all happiness. The *poena damni* is far more terrible than any *poena sensus*. The son will bear any punishment rather than be expelled from the father's house, rather than the sentence of never being allowed to see his father's face.

"*Ye cursed.*" Esau roared out with a great cry, when his father's blessing was taken away from him. Joseph's brothers

were so terrified that they could not utter a word in reply, though it was with tears and sobs that he said to them, "I am Joseph, your brother." How great then will be the horror of the reprobate, when they hear the curse out of God's mouth! "It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb. x, 31. Henceforth they cannot but consider themselves as the cursed; they will curse themselves, their passion, their seducers, their careless parents, without cessation.

"*Into fire.*" A part of the *poena sensus*, more terrible than any misery man can imagine, kindled by the wrath of an angry God. You can hardly bear common bodily pains, but "which of you can dwell with devouring fire, * * with everlasting burnings?" Isa. xxxiii, 14. And it is written, "Into fire." Fire on all sides, torment and the worm everywhere; no escape, howling and gnashing of teeth the only consolation, if consolation you may call it.

"*Into everlasting fire.*" "And the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever, neither have they rest day nor night." Apoc. xiv, 11. No sun of grace shines there, all the stars fell from heaven, no sympathy, no intercession, no more time, no end, no salvation, no desire. "The wicked shall see, and shall be angry; he shall gnash with his teeth and pine away; the desire of the wicked shall perish." Ps. cxi, 10.

"*Which was prepared for the devil and his angels.*" Tremble ye sinners, your punishment has been prepared, is ready. Accomplices of sin, call to mind the horrible, everlasting society. Cast out of the society of saints, to be forever in the society of Satan, of Judas Iscariot, etc.; what horror!

"*For I was hungry,*" *etc.* If it is said of the infidel, "Who believeth not, he is judged," the same is said of the lukewarm Christian, who contents himself with saying "Lord! Lord!" The time for good works is passed, an eternity of torments is impending. Work therefore, whilst it is day, the night approaches, etc. "Cause him to be your debtor, whom you fear as your revenger." St. Ambrose.

*Peroration:* And now, O ye kings, understand: receive instruction, you that judge the earth, (Ps. ii, 10,) all you that are earth-born, and you sons of men, both rich and poor together. Ps. xlviii, 3. "To have lost the fear and remembrance of the last judgment, I take it for a great fear and punishment of sin." St. Eusebius.

J. MARCHANT.

## Second Sunday of Advent.

### I.
### DIGNITY OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN.

Jesus said of John that he was more than all the prophets, yea the greatest of all that are born of women, because he was in closer relation to him than all the prophets, and because he was neither a reed, nor hungry after the pleasures of this world, but for firmness in faith and purity of morals excelled all men. In this regard the Christian holds a higher position in the kingdom of God than the Saints of the Old Testament; and if he corresponds with his calling, he enjoys a nobility extolling him above all who are born of women (only by flesh), the children of this world. Let us consider the great dignity of the Christian.

I. THE CHRISTIAN HAS AN INTIMATE RELATION TO GOD.

1. *Being a child of God.* "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be named and should be the sons of God." I John iii, 1; Cf Rom. viii, 16; "For the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God," etc. Hence we are taught to say "Our Father."

What honor of the world could be compared with this dignity? God our Father—Who is God? If we are God's children, we resemble him, because with God the words have no empty sound. He called Abram, Abraham, and he made him father of many people. He called Simon, Peter, and Simon was made the rock of the Church, and will be the foundation of the Church to the consummation of the world. Therefore, if God is our father, we glory in a special resemblance to God. "Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God: and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like to him." I John iii, 2. —Let your heart rejoice in this great dignity, and have respect for yourselves.

2. *Being a member of Jesus Christ.* Christ our head, we members of his body. Eph. v, 30. From this we may infer how great is

*Our dignity*, being intimately connected with the "Son of the living God."

*Our happiness.* Together with Jesus, we are the object of divine, paternal love. Hence the good sayings: "Your father in heaven knows what you are in need of." "I'll ascend to my Father, and to your Father."

*Our consolation.* Neither poverty nor contempt can take away from us this nobility of soul; Jesus himself was poor and despised.

II. HE HAS A GREAT WEALTH IN GOD.

It is not of earthly, perishable goods, but of eternal riches that the Christian boasts, viz:

1. *Of being a child of light.* "All you are the children of light, and children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." I Thess. v, 5.

He knows the truth and rejoices in this great good, for which so many longed that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death.

By this knowledge he is led to virtue and the discipleship of Jesus. "If you continue in my word, you shall be my diciples indeed: and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John viii, 3119.

He puts his confidence in God and is joyful of heart in both good and evil days, even in prison. St. John, the Martyrs.

2. *Of being a child of grace.* How precious is the gift of which the Apostle writes: "I give thanks to my God always for you for the grace of God, that is given you in Christ Jesus: That in all things you are made rich in him." I Cor. i, 4.

God is with the true Christian. "If God be for us, who is against us?" Rom. viii, 31. He has part only with Jesus, and "how hath he not also, with him, given us all things?" Rom. viii, 32. And an angel bears him up, lest he dash his foot against a stone.

The treasures of the Church are opened to him. Sacraments, Sacrifice of Mass. "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure." Ps. xxxv, 9.

Heaven is opened to him. "If sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Rom. viii, 17.

Try by every means to preserve this sublime dignity of a Christian. If you have been careless in regard to this, listen to the warning of the Holy Ghost: "Be mindful, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and do penance." Apoc. ii, 5.

SCHERER.

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## II

## VALUE OF POVERTY.

"The blind see * * the poor have the gospel preached to them, and blessed is he that shall not be scandalized in me." Our Lord wants none to be scandalized in him. But his coming in poverty, his coming for the poor, his proclaiming the poor blessed, all this was the very scandal given to the Jews. What does the world now-a-days think of poverty? Wealth is to the world the sovereign good, the mantle for every vice; poverty the greatest evil and ignominy. We should set our judgment right. Even heathens, as Zeno, were convinced of the value of poverty; so much more should we be convinced of it, we being disciples of Jesus, who chose poverty for his inheritance. We are right in esteeming poverty.

### PART I.

### CHRISTIAN RELIGION OWES EVERYTHING TO POVERTY.

1. *Our religion proceeded from the bosom of poverty. Jesus its founder poor himself.* Its cradle the manger; Mary, the poor Virgin of Nazareth, the mother of salvation; poor people his first adorers. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. Luke ix, 58. Fishes, instead of him, have to pay the tribute; he lives on alms, never works miracles for his own relief, has no sepulchre of his own.

*Jesus claims poverty.* Shepherds are called first; fishermen are his confidential friends; he calls the poor blessed, lives and works for and amongst them. Rich men must become poor, before they are allowed to become his diciples. Example Matthews. "Everyone of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv, 33. "Go sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor * * and come follow me." Mark x, 21.

*Jesus ennobles poverty.* Therefore ye poor, be not ashamed of your poverty; leave to the rich their pomp. Religion causes true greatness. John, Paul were greater and happier than Herod, Nero. And ye rich, humilate yourselves, for your faith has been founded by the poor, and

2. *Owes to poverty its progress.* It would have been prudent after human manner to have the Gospel preached by rich men. Gold is the key of brains and heart. God's plan was to the contrary.

*The Apostles poor.* Who are these to whom it is said: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them * *" Mtt. xxviii, 19. Poor men; a bark and nets all their property. Peter the head of them, who said: "Silver and gold I have none." Act. iii, 6. Paul the Apostle of nations, who said: "As for such things as were needful for me, and for them that are with me, these hands have furnished." Act. xx, 34. They were commanded: "Carry neither purse, nor script, nor shoes." Luke x, 4. Rich man, be humble; put the question to yourself, if you would have been fit for the Apostleship, notwithstanding your avarice, greediness of enjoyment, laziness. Hardly. Do you find it surprising, that up to our days the Lord selects his priests principally from the poor?

*The first believers poor.* The poor were the first under the emblem of the cross. The disciples poor,—an objection to the gentiles. The rich become poor by Christian communism. "Harken, my dearest brethren; hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?" James ii, 5. On the other hand, who were the enemies, the persecutors? Why?—The Cesars would have been Christians, if one could be

Cesar and Christian at one and the same time. (Tertullian.) "Do not the rich oppress you by might?" James ii, 6. Ye who are rich, you are the heirs, the spiritual children of the poor, as far as religion is concerned. Reward them!

3. Owes its glory to poverty.

In the lower orders faith and discipline were preserved. Consult history, look around amongst your acquaintances.

In poverty religion brought forth its most charming blossoms. Thebais, hermitages, cloisters. St. Francis Seraphicus, the miraculous flower of heroic virtue, grew in the garden of poverty.

But scandal, dishonoring of religion arose from wealth or the longing for wealth. "Do not they (the rich) blaspheme the good name that is invoked upon you?" James ii, 7. Sin, infidelity, indifferentism—where is it generally found?

Such are the merits of poverty rendered to Christianity. How precious! how venerable! But now see what poverty owes to Christianity.

PART II.

POVERTY OWES ITS VALUE TO RELIGION.

Why does Jesus say exclusively: "The poor have the gospel preached to them." Why? Because the poor are blessed.

1. For the poor have means of salvation of which the wealthy are deprived. Poverty promotes

*Humility*, the ground and foundation of every virtue. "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xviii, 3.

How rarely is a rich man an humble man! Behold a poor man who suddenly becomes rich!

Why should the poor be proud? They have nothing to be proud of.

*The divine virtues.*

Faith. The poor are happily excluded from the frivolous society of the infidel, and has no knowledge of irreligious literature.

Hope. The troubles of life admonish him to put his hope in a world to come, and to expect his reward at the hands of eternal justice. Quite different with the rich.

Charity. His heart yet capable of pure feelings, is always dependent on God and men, therefore a grateful and loving heart.

Every moral virtue: abstinence, moderation, mercy, patience. The reasons for it are obvious.

Penance. Ye poor, you suffer. I feel for you, and yet congratulate you. If you would only acknowledge your good lot! The blessings of heaven and the fat of the earth are hardly ever together.

Woe to the rich! They are distracted, their mind turned away from the one thing necessary. The word "penance" is ridiculous or dreadful to them. Wherefore

Hail to the poor! His bread is earned in the sweat of his brow; poverty and contempt are crosses laid on his shoulders, but it is penance at the same time. It is fasting and self-denial. Esteem poverty.

2. The poor enjoy the sweetness of grace more than the rich.

God gives his grace to all without partiality; but it is hard for the rich to be separated from their earthly goods, whilst the poor are light-hearted in poverty. The pious hermit feels happy; so many needy are content, whilst the king of France envies a poor lay brother. St. Bernard and his companions. St. Francis Seraphicus is afflicted, and shedding tears, because there is one poorer than he.

*Peroration:* Ye poor love poverty—the cup of sorrow will be replaced by the cup of joy. Ye rich, be poor in spirit. Both struggle for unperishable goods. "I esteem all things to be but loss * * and count them but as dung that I may gain Christ." Phil. iii, 8.

PERRIN.

## The Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

### I.

### THE FAIREST OF DAUGHTERS.

"As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Cant. ii, 2. "Many daughters have gathered together riches; thou hast surpassed them all." Prov. xxxi, 29. "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising; fair as the moon, bright as the sun?" Cant. xi, 9. It is with these words that, with the Holy Church, we praise to-day the Blessed Virgin. She, the Blessed amongst women, is praiseworthy indeed. For great are her prerogatives, especially in the moment of her Conception.

PART I.

Though a daughter of Adam, she was not heiress to his sin.

Adam is the forefather of all men, therefore of Mary, also; all men are his children, "but if children, heirs also." Rom. viii, 17. Though this is the sad lot of men, it does not apply to Mary. Her condition is exceptional, because she was

1. *The Mother of her God.* As such it became her to be exempt

*From original sin.* "Mary has been chosen by heaven to be the Mother of God." St. Thom. Vill. Now "God chose a mother he needed not be ashamed of, and such a one as was becoming for him." St. Pet. Dam. But if heiress of Adam's sin, would Mary have been such a mother?

*From any actual sin.* "Those chosen by God for some design, are so prepared and put in such a condition, that they are found suited to the task for which they are chosen." St. Thom. Aq. Mary having been chosen to be the mother of God, she must have been fitted for that high dignity, which she would not have been, if she had committed only one venial sin, because the dishonor of the mother would have dishonored the son.

2. *The Mother of her Creator.* God not only chose her from all eternity to be his mother, but also created and formed her in

time. "I created the mother of whom I was to be born." St. Aug. Who, then, would believe that the Creator had created his mother in original sin deprived of the state of grace?

*She was dearer to him than the Angels.* "God creating the angels imparted to them the sanctifying grace." St. Aug. Should he not have shown the same kindness to his own mother? "He preferred his mother to the angels, and created her in a sublimer and purer state." Gloss. in. ord. in. c. 5, Ep. Rom.

*He could and would protect her.* If God had suffered Mary to be conceived in sin, the cause of his doing so would have been either because he could not or would not protect her against Original Sin. A scandalous assertion. He could protect her. "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth." Matt. xxviii, 18. And to deny his willingness, would be dishonoring the best son.

3. *The Mother of her Redeemer.* "Christ has come more for the purpose of redeeming the Virgin than all the rest of God's creatures." St. Bernardin. Now "there are two ways of redemption: the one by which the fallen are lifted up; the other, by which one is prevented from falling." St. Aug. He is redeemed in a nobler manner for whom care is taken that he may not fall. St. Antonin. It is in this way that Mary was redeemed. "Our Lady received the grace by which she was protected against contamination of Original Sin." S. Bonav.

PART II.

A daughter of God, never destitute of his grace.

Mary being born like all the offspring of Adam, was a child of nature. Her soul having been created and united with her body by God, she was a child of God, too. But she never was a child of wrath or of Satan, never deprived of grace; on the contrary, at the very moment of her Conception she possessed

*Sanctifying grace.* Christ had sanctified and adorned the temple wherein he was to dwell. "The most high has sanctified his own tabernacle." "She has become the holiest in her conception." St. Thom. "She has obtained from God the grace lost by Eve." St. Bernard.

*Superabundant grace.* "As all the rivers flow into the ocean, so the river of the graces of angels and Saints flows into Mary." St. Bonav. "There is no virtue, no splendor, no grace that would not shine in the glorious Virgin." St. Jerome.

*The grace of perseverance.* In being sanctified, God by his grace comes to us, and will stay with us. But we can expel him by mortal sin. In Mary, divine grace was immovable and unchangeable, because God never forsook her.

PART III.

A daughter of Joachim, but exempt from his miseries.

The fatal consequences of Original Sin fell upon Joachim like the rest of Adam's children; viz.: ignorance, concupiscence and proneness to evil. Mary enjoyed from the very moment of her Conception

*Light of the understanding.* "When her body was formed and her soul created, she enjoyed the use of her reason." St. Vinc. Fer. "Being yet in her mother's womb she enjoyed the perfect light of understanding." St. Bernardin.

*Peace of her soul.* "The law of the flesh did not disturb in her the law of her mind." St. Cypr. "It is Mary in whom there was no struggle, and perfect peace took possession." Richard St. Vict.

*Divine love in her heart.* Who loved God more than the Immaculate, the Purest, the Holiest! "The greater that purity is the greater is love. St. Anselm.

*Peroration:* How great are the prerogatives granted to the Blessed Virgin in her Conception! Be it a motive for you to honor her whom God has honored, especially by avoiding and fleeing sin. "Let no sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body." Rom. vi, 12.

Laselve.

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II.

It is Sanctifying Grace only that renders our souls truly great, rich and happy.

According to St. Augustin, the Holy Virgin is more blessed by reason of having carried her divine Son in her heart than in

her womb; i. e., she was happier by being adorned with sanctifying grace than by being the Mother of God. We have it in our power to partake of the same happiness by possessing sanctifying grace. And that the state of this grace is true happiness, we see from the following considerations:

PART I.

The state of sanctifying grace renders your soul truly great, however humble your earthly conditions may be.

The soul of the just is great in the eyes of God: Sanctifying grace

*Attracts God's eyes and complacency.* Some of the holy fathers make the remark that at the time of Job there were many great and mighty upon earth; yet not upon them God's eyes were, but upon Job, "like whom there is none on earth, a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and avoiding evil." Job, i, 8. For "the eyes of the Lord are upon the just."

*Elevates to the dignity of children of God.* "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be named and should be the sons of God." But St. John adds: "Therefore, the world hath not known us." (John, iii, 1); i. e.; before the world neither knowing true greatness, nor God himself, we are little.

*Renders our souls participants of divine nature.* For if God is your father, and you are his child, you are in close relation with him. Jesus prays: "That they all, who through the word of the Apostles shall believe in him, may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii, 21); viz.: by adoption and partaking of the divine nature.

St. Cyprian and other Fathers of the Church, explain this doctrine by a simile: iron put in fire burns as if it were fire, though its nature is not changed. In a similar way we resemble the Deity by the fire of divine love (sanctifying grace), but the nature of your soul will not be changed.

*This greatness is far above all earthly greatness and dignity.* How great was Solomon in the state of grace; how little, de-

prived of it! How great appears Tertullian in the state of grace, but after he had lost it, what did all his science amount to? Who is greater than the Blessed Virgin, because of her being in the state of sanctifying grace, though she was hardly noticed by the world? What would she be without this grace?

PART II.

By sanctifying grace you are truly rich, however poor you may be in earthly goods.

The just lays up for himself treasures in heaven, though he may be as poor as Lazarus. For by reason of being in the state of sanctifying grace,

He partakes of the infinite merits of *Jesus Christ.* He is in union with God, and a member of the body, the head of which is Jesus Christ. He partakes of his sacrifices, prayers, and meritorious acts. "I am the vine; you the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for without me you can do nothing." John, xv, 5. The treasure cannot be exhausted.

He partakes of all merits of the *Saints.* "I am a partaker of all them that fear thee, and that keep thy commandments. Ps. cxviii, 63.

The *least* work, if done with good intention, is meritorious for him. "Whoever shall give a cup of water in my name * * * he shall not lose his reward." Mark ix, 40.

What is all the wealth without God's grace? Whatever great things man, being deprived of grace, may perform, they are not meritorious. Though he should possess all earthly goods, without grace he is needy and poor. "What do you possess, unless you possess God, the only good?" St. Aug.

PART III.

By sanctifying grace you are truly happy, however much you may be offended.

The just may be cheerful and happy, because he has the testimony of a *good conscience.* "Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience." II. Cor. i, 12.

The hope of *everlasting reward* after short suffering. "Fear

not, my son, we lead indeed a poor life; but we shall have many good things if we fear God, and depart from all sin, and do that which is good." Tob. iv, 23. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us." Rom. viii, 18. "Our present tribulation, which is momentary and light, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." II. Cor. iv, 17. "I have fought a good fight * * * For the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice." II Tim. iv, 7—8.

The sinner is unquiet and tormented in the midst of his joys. He finds his worst enemy within himself—an *evil conscience.* "There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord. Ps. xlviii, 22. "They have not called upon God; there have they trembled for fear, where there was no fear." Ps. lxi, 6.

*Peroration:* You see in the Blessed Virgin what great things are received by grace. The humble handmaid of the Lord and Virgin of Nazareth received true greatness; the poor Virgin the greatest riches, for she is full of grace; she who was pierced with the sword of sorrows, receives the greatest joy and happiness, so that all generations call her blessed, for the Lord is with her. We received the very same grace by baptism, and have it in our reach to be truly great, rich and happy, if we do not deprive ourselves of this grace. We should say to the seducer who tries to rob us of this precious grace, what St. Basil once said to the king Fokas: "Thou shouldst know that God, by his grace, is with me; therefore I shall never adore a human creature—never lose divine grace for the love of a creature."

JACOB MAZZIOLI.

## Third Sunday of Advent.

### I.

### THE END OF MAN.

Ask yourself: who art thou, that you may know your destiny, the end for which you live in this world. O man, thou shalt serve God in this world, and by doing so, thou shalt be happy in the next.

PART I.

TO SERVE GOD IS THE ONLY OCCUPATION OF MAN.

1. *Man is created for this purpose.* Man is from God, therefore not his own master. It does not become him to be independent and choose at pleasure his own destiny. Man is created *for* God, hence it is a disgrace to him to forget his origin from God and his destiny for God by seeking after the foolish things of this world. How pitiful is the complaint of your Creator: "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth * * I have brought up children, and exalted them, but they have despised me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel hath not known me, and my people hath not understood. Isa. i, 2, 3. "Is this the return thou makest to the Lord, O foolish and senseless people? Is not he thy father, that possessed thee, and made thee, and created thee? Deut. xxxii, 6.

2. *Man cannot be truly happy in this world, unless he serves God.*

Riches, honor and lust are the idols of this world. But can these perishable things make man happy? Can they give rest and peace to man's heart, so as to long for nothing more? Experience speaks against it. Solomon, the happiest of kings, says: "I have seen all things that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccle. i, 14. What good will earthly happiness do for you on your death-bed? "Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? Luke xii, 20. Now, as no man can be truly happy by the things of this world,

it follows that we must seek our happiness by serving God. "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord." Psalm cxliii, 15.

3. *Man cannot serve God and the world at the same time.*

God's ark and Dagon, Christ and Belial, light and darkness, will never unite. "The Lord thy God thou shalt adore, and him only shalt thou serve." Mt. iv, 10. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." Mt. xxii, 37. "No man can serve two masters." Mt. vi, 24.

Therefore, those who will go to church, receive the sacraments, and notwithstanding this, do not shun sin and its proximate occasion, are deceived by the devil and forsaken by God. "Their heart is divided: now they shall perish." Osee. x, 2. Example: Antiochus in his sham-penitence.

4. *To serve God, will make you truly happy*, both here and hereafter.

In the next world. "I will be thy reward exceeding great." You will be in the society of the children of God, of the Saints and Holy Angels, you will be happy in the enjoyment of the Blessed Trinity forever.

In this world. It is a prejudice to suppose that the service of God would prevent you from fulfilling the duties of your state of life. Example: King St. Louis, of France, St. Henry, Emperor of Germany, St. Elizabeth, of Hungary. God will bless you, will at least give you the necessaries of life. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." Mt. vi, 33. It is true that God leads his privileged children through hard trials, in order to exalt them among the rest of his children, as Job, Tobias; but it is the *extraordinary* way of divine Providence.

It is true that the wicked sometimes receive great temporal benefits from God, to reward them for their few good works, but they will never enjoy the peace of heart, the sweet consolation, of which God's servants partake in this earthly abode. "Come to me, all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.

Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls." Mt. xi, 28, 29. Look around you, and you will see good souls of your acquaintance truly happy.

PART II.

TO SERVE GOD IS NO BURDEN.

Our Master is our best Father, who is content with our good will, if we are not able to do hard works, as fasting or giving alms.

Our kind Master does not require of us many or burdensome services. If instead of ten, he had given us one hundred commandments to keep, we had no right to complain, and these few commandments are not heavy. I John v, 3. "My yoke is sweet and my burden light." Mt. xi, 30. All faithful servants of God are witnesses, while the converted sinners avow that no yoke is heavier than the yoke of sin, especially on account of the stings of conscience. "Know thou, and see, that it is an evil and a bitter thing for thee, to have left the Lord thy God." Jerem. ii, 19. Is it burdensome to love God above all things, to do everything in his honor, to love your neighbor and wish him well? And does not the hope for an infinite reward render the service of God easy?

Jesus Christ set a good example and strengthened us by his grace. He was poor, despised, persecuted and crucified. He does not require so much of his disciples.

*Peroration:* Take St. John the Baptist for your model. His whole life was devoted to the service of God, to the love of the Lamb of God. He was neither ashamed nor afraid of giving testimony to the truth, which he sealed with his own blood. He is the friend of the bridegroom in heaven, which friendship with God is above all human friendship, and will never have an end.

JOSEPH HILLEBRAND.

## II.

## DEATH AS A PREACHER.

As Jesus, before his first coming, sent St. John as his precursor, so he will send, before his second coming to the General Judgment, Henoch and Elias as his precursors. And before his coming to the Particular Judgment, he will send to everyone a precursor—Death. Like St. John, Death preaches incessantly: "Prepare the way of the Lord." Let us accompany the corps from the house of death to the grave, and listen to the Sermon of Death:

PART I.

In the house of death he says:

1. Do not trust Satan. He is a liar from the beginning. He said to Eve, in order to seduce her to sin: "No, you shall not die the death." Gen. iii, 4. He repeats the same words still, and with the same wicked intention. How true are his words! The infant, the young and the old, are they not subject to death? And has not man to die at the very time when he does not expect it?

"God doth know that you shall be as Gods." Behold how true! This corps a God! Fools are they who trust the Devil, and are not always prepared to die.

2. Do not trust the flesh. Man resembles the apple of Sodom—from without beautiful, from within full of stench and rottenness. Come and see how hideous the body is that was once distinguished for its beauty. Where is now the love and esteem of men that he enjoyed in life? Can he not say: "They that saw me without fled from me." Ps. xxx, 12. How foolish then are you, when you serve the flesh, all you who are given to vanity and sensuality!

3. Do not trust your relations, for no sooner will you have closed your eyes, than they will leave you.

They will look after your property, while nothing will be left for you but the pall. And instead of thanking you for your heritage, they will complain of you, so that the words of the Scripture will apply to you: "I am become a reproach among

all my enemies, and very much to my neighbors, and a fear to my acquaintances." Ps. xxx, 12. Why then are you so intent upon enriching others; why not intent upon gathering treasures for heaven?

PART II.

While the corps is carried to the grave, Death preaches:

*Lo! thus the glory of the world disappears.* You are carried out of your own house, accompanied by your relations and acquaintances, some of whom may mourn, some may rejoice over your departure.

*Behold how the world pays you.* No sooner you will be buried in the grave, than all go home to attend to their respective business. As you disappear out of the sight of men, so you will soon disappear out of their mind and heart. It will soon be, as if you had never lived. The dead man may say in truth: "I am forgotten as one dead from the heart. I am become as a vessel that is destroyed." Ps. xxx, 13.

Such are the thanks of the world. Why, then, will you not serve God, but the world?

PART III.

IN THE GRAVEYARD.

*How dishonoring is avarice.* And how great fools are those men whose destiny it seems to be to lay up treasures on earth, where the rust and the moth consume, and thieves dig through. Do you not know that, thanks to your greediness, you are rewarded as the hounds are treated by the hunters? They are coaxed to hunt up the deer, and when after long exertion, they take hold of it, the hunter drives them from their prey. Thus Satan spurns you on to search after the riches of this world, and when, with great labor, you have laid up a considerable sum, Death approaches you to take away all the fruit of the exertions of the brain.

*Vanity is all esteem before men.* Vanity all earthly power. The greatest monarch and the most valiant warrior are buried in the ground to moulder in the cold tomb. Therefore, "ye all insinuate humility one to another." I Pet. v, 5.

*You are brethren to one another.* For the bones of all are mingled here without distinction, and you do not know which belonged to the rich, which to the poor. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart." Leo. xix, 17.

*Peroration:* Be prepared at any time to hear Death preach to you. You must hear its sermon sooner than you may expect.

M. FABER.

## Fourth Sunday of Advent.

### I.
### THE VOICE OF GOD.

"The word of the Lord came to John, the son of Zachary, in the desert." The sinner is to be compared to a desert. For like the wilderness he is deformed, sterile of good works, fertile in thorns and thistles, a harbor of wild beasts (passions). Oh! how desolate, how empty is the soul without God, how arid without moisture from above, how sterile without celestial warmth, how deformed without the ornament of grace! But God in his infinite mercy does not cease to cry out to that poor soul.

#### PART I.

#### BY HIS WORKS.

God's works and deeds, all events in human life are as many exhortations directed to the heart of man. These exhortations come to us

#### I. IN THE SHAPE OF BENEFITS.

The benefits of God are *manifold*. Who could count them? God often gives his blessing in earthly things, and good health * * Heaven, sun and earth, all nature are God's voice praising his bounty, and challenging our thanks. "All creatures, what else are they but voices of God?" St. Aug.

Benefits, in themselves, are an invitation to the hearts of receivers—*to love the benefactor*.

God in bestowing his benefits has said intention. Hence his complaint, Jerem. v, 24: "They have not said in their heart: let us fear the Lord our God, who preserveth for us the fullness of the yearly harvest."

Even *irrational* animals should cause the sinner to blush. They are obedient to their feeders; even wild beasts are tamed by benefits received; the lion, the snake will not hurt him who feeds them. How well founded then is the bitter complaint of of our Lord: "Hear O ye heavens * * I have brought up

children, and exalted them: but they have despised me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel hath not known me." Isa. i, 2, 3.

IN THE SHAPE OF CHASTISEMENTS.

He that sleeps so sound that friendly words cannot wake him, is to be roused by shaking and pushing. God tries the same by sending afflictions which are nothing else but messengers of his love. "Those whom I love I rebuke and chastise." Apoc. iii, 19.

*Afflictions are excellent means of correction.* When about to starve, the prodigal son felt remorse; when misfortune had befallen them, Joseph's brothers saw the malignity of their having sold him, saying one to another: "We deserve to suffer these things, because we have sinned against our brother." And David, "I am turned in my anguish, whilst the thorn is fastened." Ps. xxxi, 4. Manasses in prison.

But even sufferings have sometimes no effect on the soul of the sinner. There are sleeping sinners of different kind.

Some of them will open their eyes, see the condition they are in for a short while, and turn round again.

Others will awake fully, arise, confess, make good resolutions, but do not put them into execution, or delay their execution.

Others are like opium-eaters, not moved by the greatest shocks, not moved by any misfortune.

*God's complaint.* "In vain have I struck your children, they have not received correction." Jerem. ii, 30. "They have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than the rocks, and they have refused to return." Jerem. v, 3. "For what shall I strike you any more, you that increase transgression. Isa. i, 5.

PART II.

BY HIS WORD.

That the deeds of God may not remain an obscure language to him, he interprets them to the sinner by his spoken word

FROM THE PULPIT,

where you do not hear words of man, but of God.

1. The preacher of the Gospel is an instrument employed by God himself; he is "the voice of one crying." Who is the one crying, if the preacher is only the sounding of his voice?

2. The preacher speaks in the name and on the authority of God. Like the prophet of the Old Testament, he has been commanded: "Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their wicked doings, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. lviii, 1. What else does the herald of the Gospel announce but the teachings of Jesus, the word of God? Is it not the same, as if God himself would speak to you?

3. Therefore, in some sense, God himself speaks out of the mouth of the priest, so much more because God's special grace assists him. "It is not you that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Matt. x, 20. "He that heareth you, heareth me," Luke x, 16; and because all true faithful accepted the sermon as God's word. "Therefore we also give thanks to God without ceasing: because that when you had received from us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men, but (as it truly is) the word of God." I Thess. ii, 13.

BY INSPIRATIONS.

Not only mediately through creatures and events, and the preaching of his ministers, God speaks to our heart, but also immediately by his inspirations, which are two-fold.

1. Tender and inflaming. God often sends a spark of his love into our heart and inflames it with love, devotion and contrition. Example of Mary Magdalen. "My soul melted, when he spoke." Canticles v, 6. Example of the disciples going to Emmaus. "Was not our heart burning within us, whilst he was speaking in the way?" Luke xxiv, 32.

2. Vehement and striking, so as to prevent all opposition of the sinner, piercing to the very marrow of the bones. Conversion of Saulus. "For the word of God is living and effectual, and more penetrating than a two-edged sword; and reaching

into the division of the soul, and the spirit, of the joints also, and the marrow." Heb. iv, 12.

*Peroration:* Let us then (1) consider this manifold voice of God as a great grace, and say with David: "O my God, be not thou silent to me: lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." Ps. xxvii, 1. (2) Listen to and take the voice of God at heart. "To-day if you shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Ps. xciv, 8. And what says this voice of the one crying? It says: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." ST. THOMAS of VILLANOVA.

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## II.

## PENANCE NECESSARY FOR EVERYONE.

I wish to God I could, with the same effect as St. John the Baptist, call out to you: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight his paths." Matt. iii, 3. "Bring forth fruit worthy of penance." Luke iii, 8. Most of his hearers were converted and prepared themselves for the coming of Christ. The second coming of Christ as judge is near at hand. Are you ready to meet him?" "At what hour you think not, the son of man will come." Luke xii, 40. If he were to come now, would you be ready? What does your conscience say? I fear, it says: No. What do you behold in the world everywhere? "Iniquity hath abounded, the charity of man hath grown cold." Matt. xxiv, 12. The youth corrupted and corrupting; the parents destitute of true christianity. "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find, think you, faith on earth?" Luke xviii, 8. Penance is as necessary to us as to the Jews; therefore I call out with St. John: "Do penance; prepare ye the way of the Lord." For

### PART I.

### PENANCE IS NECESSARY FOR THE SINNER, IN ORDER TO BE RECONCILED TO GOD.

1. *According to the written word of God.* "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." Luke xiii, 5. Analogous to John iii, 5: "Unless a man be born again of water

and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Therefore absolutely necessary. No excuse; no grace in case of negligence.

II. According to the example of all the Saints. David, Magdalen, Peter, Mary of Egypt, etc. The Saints, not the children of the world are competent witnesses in spiritual affairs.

III. Reason teaches the necessity of penance.

1. *As satisfaction* for the guilt, the injury against God. "Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou pay the last farthing." Matt. v, 26.

2. *As atonement.* "Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you." Zach. i, 3. "If the wicked do penance * * living he shall live, and shall not die." Ezech. xviii, 21. Call to mind the effects of the penance done by the Ninivites, Magdelen, etc.

3. *As punishment.* Man author of sin. Divine justice owes it to itself to resent every attack upon the moral order. "I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with stripes." Ps. lxxxviii, 33. Man *can* prevent the divine punishment, and must prevent it; for

Self-punishment is less hard, than to fall into the hands of the living God.

Meritorious, and therefore not lasting so long, on account of *free* resolution.

Necessary in itself, according to "*Quo quis peccavit, per idem puxitur et idem.*"

4. *As spiritual remedy, viz:*

In order to repair moral damage: penance is the balsam to heal the wound, after the arrow has been taken out.

Preserving, namely exciting zeal, conferring grace, setting aside the occasions of sin. Therefore indispensable. Apostrophe to the different classes of sinners.

PART II.

PENANCE IS NECESSARY TO THE JUST. ARGUMENTS:

1. No one is sure of justification, "Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred" (Eccle. ix, 1.), because

it is often impossible to draw the lines between mortal and venial sin. Why so?

Because man does not know for sure, that his contrition, satisfaction and resolutions are sufficient.

2. Everyone offends daily in little things, and for every sin you must make satisfaction, till the last farthing be paid. How many and severe punishments in the next world, unless you make satisfaction, while on earth! How prudently the Saints acted who, though not guilty of great offenses, did great penance.

3. After the remission of guilt and eternal punishment there remains yet temporal punishment to *expiate*. The penance of the confessional should be an admonition to voluntary penance. Call to mind the rigor of the ancient Church, of her penitential canons. Behold David weeping, after Nathan announced the remission of his sins. Magdalen sheds tears all her lifetime, from the moment she heard the words, *Confide filia*, etc.

4. Everyone is liable to fall, while he lives. Penance is a hedge of thorns around the paradise of virtues.

*Peroration:* Now then, you who are impenitent, are you holier than the Saints, surer of grace and perseverance than they? more than John in the desert; more than Paul who is not ashamed to say, "I chastise my body * * lest perhaps I myself should become reprobate." I Cor. ix, 27. Behold Jesus himself: he atones for our sins from the Cradle to the Cross. Be not foolish, not cruel by not doing penance. Behold the happiness of the penitents in heaven! Behold their rewards. So run that you may obtain the prize. But remember that the essence of penance is constituted by the acts required for the sacrament of confession, viz: True contrition, a firm purpose of amendment, sincere confession, and the performance of the penance imposed.

VALKE.

## Christmas Day.

### I.

### THE THREE MASSES ON CHRISTMAS, AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

There never was a child of such dignity born, the birth of a child never brought such great blessing into the world. Whilst the angels praised God, saying: "Glory to God in the highest," the Holy Church celebrates the joyful event by the most precious gift she possesses, the Holy Sacrifice of Mass. She offers it up three times on this day to give glory to God in the highest, in regard to the three-fold birth of Jesus Christ. She offers it up three times for all men, that the fullness of grace may be poured out upon them in their three different conditions.

#### PART I.

#### THREE-FOLD BIRTH OF CHRIST.

1. The *temporal* birth of Jesus Christ is signified by the first mass, the gospel of which gives the history of Christ's birth at Bethlehem.

*The doctrine.* Jesus, whose coming was promised in the garden of paradise, whom the nations had expected for four thousand years, is born of the Virgin Mary by the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, becoming a member of our human family.

*Corollary.* The birth of Jesus Christ is a manifestation of divine veracity and fidelity, mercy and justice, wisdom and omnipotance. The circumstances of his birth represent Jesus (1) as Saviour, who was to atone for our pride, disobedience, avarice and sensuality; (2) as teacher, who was to instruct us about the real value of earthly things, and invites us to follow him.

2. The *spiritual* birth of Jesus Christ in our hearts is signified by the second mass, the gospel of which represents the shepherds as partakers of the good tidings and celestial joy.

*The doctrine.* Jesus is "the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world * * As many as

received him, to them he gave power to be made the sons of God." John i, 8–12. "The Son of God was made the Son of man, that the sons of man be made sons of God." St. Aug. He says of himself that he is the way, truth and life. Nobody can obtain salvation but by his redemption, his grace, his doctrine and precepts.

*Corollary.* "The night is passed, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences." Rom. xiii, 12–14.

3. The *eternal* birth of Jesus Christ is signified by the third mass wherein the beginning of the Gospel according to St. John is read.

*Doctrine.* "In the beginning was the Lord, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was made nothing that was made." John i, 1–3.

*Corollary.* Adorable mystery; infinite condescension of him who descended into human misery from the throne of his majesty, in order to qualify the human race for an infinite satisfaction! Adore and give thanks.

## PART II.

### THREE DIFFERENT CONDITIONS OF MEN.

1. The spiritual darkness expelled by Jesus, who as he was born at night, appears on our altars at midnight mass. "The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light; to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen." Isa. ix, 2. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness did not comprehend it." John i, 4, 5.

*a.* How does this spiritual darkness appear now-a-days? Just as in the times of gentilism it appears as denegation of a personal God, as ignorance and dominion of sin.

*b.* It renders man unhappy, is the cause of many miseries, and, leaves the soul void of comfort in life and death.

*c.* In Jesus alone we find salvation. It was offered to the gentiles, and likewise to-day the tolling of the bell in night-time exhorts you to partake of the salvation through Jesus Christ, and receive the eternral light by true conversion.

2. By the spiritual dawning, intimated by the second mass at an early hour, the beginning of a new day is signified, the beginning of conversion. The shepherds may be a symbol.

*a.* As the shepherds were watching all night, so souls anxious for their salvation watch the time of grace, not deferring their conversion and good works from time to time.

*b.* By the appearance and message of the holy angels grace may be signified, without which no man will obtain salvation, and which will not be refused to him who asks for it.

*c.* The conduct of the shepherds shows what should be your relation to grace. They believed, exhorted one another, obeyed with haste, found whom they sought, praised God and promoted his honor. Do likewise.

3. By the third mass celebrated in bright day, it may be insinuated that we should abandon ourselves entirely to God.

*a.* Jesus Christ gave himself entirely up for us. "And the Word was made flesh." John i, 14. He died for us and dwells among us in the Blessed Sacrament.

*b.* We should give ourselves entirely up to him. It is for this reason that "the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us that, renouncing impiety, and worldly desires, we should live soberly and justly, and piously in this world," etc. Titus ii, 11, 12.

*Peroration:* Only, if we give ourselves up to him entirely, can we be "waiting for the blessed hope, and coming of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people acceptable, pursuing good works."

SCHEILL.

## II.
## FRUIT OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

It is for our salvation that the Son of God descended from heaven. Our salvation is founded on faith, hope and charity as its three pillars. These three divine virtues are the heavenly fruit of the Incarnation and Birth of the Son of God.

### PART I.

### FAITH IS THE FRUIT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

"That man might embrace truth with greater confidence, the substantial Truth, the Son of God, came and established faith." St. Aug.

1. After the fall of mankind, before the coming of Jesus Christ, it was not easy for man to obtain the knowledge of the true God, for

*a.* Many deviated from the way leading to the knowledge of God, worshiping the sun, moon and false gods.

*b.* One of the causes of this error seems to be, because God, being the supreme and most perfect Spirit, is not accessible to our corporal senses, on which man is so prone to make his ideas and views dependent.

*c.* But the knowledge of God being absolutely necessary for salvation, God, to assist the feebleness of our senses, becomes man, dwells among us, that we, seeing him in a visible form, might be induced to love the Invisible. By his Incarnation he became "the way, and the truth, and the life." John xiv, 6; 'and we all have become children taught of the Lord." Isa. liv, 13.

2. In the Old Law, the way to the knowledge of God was more difficult and darker for even those walking in the true light, than is now the case with us.

*a.* They were, so to say, yet children in the elementary school, led by figures, types, shadows and obscure expressions. "God hath spoken on divers occasions, and many ways, in times past, to the fathers by the prophets." Heb. i, 1. So he appeared to Ezechiel on the wheels of Cherubim (x, 1); to Isaias sitting upon

a throne, high and elevated (vi, 1); to Jeremias in a "rod watching" (i, 11).

*b.* We are better instructed in the truth after the coming of Jesus Christ. "Last of all, in these days hath God spoken to us by his Son." Heb. i, 1. The prophecy of Isaias, lii, 6, was fulfilled: "Therefore my people shall know my name in that day, for I myself that spoke, behold, I am here."

*c.* Therefore great light of wisdom and great graces were imparted to those who dwelt in frequent meditation on the childhood of Jesus, conversing with him. So St. Edmund, who, when yet a boy, found an indescribable delight in the child Jesus, to whom He once appeared as a delightful and wonderfully beautiful boy, with the inscription on his forehead, "Jesus of Nazareth;" exhorting him to sign his forehead with the same holy name, to be his shield in all dangers. It is known that St. Antony of Padua received from his conversation with the child Jesus, whom he frequently saw and embraced, the grace of converting thousands of hard sinners.

## PART II.

### HOPE IS THE FRUIT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

"Nothing was more necessary for elevating our hope than that God should show the greatness of his infinite love. Now, what could proclaim this love more strikingly than his taking our nature to be his own?" St. Aug.

1. He took our nature from Abraham's seed, the very same nature that had forsaken God. He has become our brother, our flesh, he cannot forsake, cannot repudiate us. "Be of good cheer, O man, for thy judgment depends on the sentence of thy brother." St. Anselm. As Abraham, entering Egypt, said to his wife: "Say therefore, I pray thee, that thou art my sister, that I may be well used for thee, and that my soul may live for thy sake (Gen. xii, 13), so we may say to Jesus: "Say, I pray thee, that thou art my brother," etc.

2. Therefore let us rejoice with the prophet in holy hope: "I will give thanks to thee, O Lord, for thou wast angry with me; thy wrath is turned away, and thou hast comforted me. Behold,

God is my Saviour, I will deal confidently and will not fear, because the Lord is my strength, and my praise, and he is become my salvation." Is. xii, 1, 2. In humility and joy of heart we may say to God: "Behold, God is become as one of us."

3. Before God was unknown, unapproachable, invisible, a God of revenge in the deluge, at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha, on Sinai, in the desert. "Who will stand before the Lord, the Holy God? cried the Bethsamites, when fifty thousand of them were killed for having looked at the Ark of the Covenant.

4. After his birth, having become a child, he is lovely and mild exceedingly. "Behold, God is my Saviour," we may say. Full of confidence, without fear we may approach him. We may draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains (Is. xii, 3), out of his Blood, Grace, Sacraments and merits.

Therefore despair not, O sinner! go to the manger; this infant-child knows no wrath; honey and milk are under his tongue (Cant. iv, 11). The Annointed has oil to annoint and heal thy wounds; his name is Jesus—Saviour.

PART III.

CHARITY THE FRUIT OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

"God appeared on earth principally to make known his love towards us." (St. Aug.) If it was once difficult for us to love him, we will now love him in return, for

1. Love demands return of love. "If thou desire to be loved, love." (Seneca.) "Love the charity of him, who for love of you descended into the womb of the Virgin." (St. Aug.) "My beloved to me," says the spouse (Cant. ii, 16); i. e., he is born for me, for me he lives and dies; what he does, he does for love of me. "And I to him," i. e, I devote myself to his love, and all that I possess. "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." (I Cor. xvi, 22), the cause of which is the coming of Christ: Maran Atha; i. e., the Lord comes. Since Christ appeared in the world, revealing his infinite charity, nobody can make excuses for not loving him.

2. Mutual resemblance is the cause of love. The Son of God became man, to obtain the familiar love of men. As we once

were clothed in the image of Terrestrial Adam, so we are now clothed in the image of Celestial Adam, so that everyone of us may say: "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me." Gal. ii, 20.

It is therefore that holy souls were always attracted by the love of the infant-child Jesus. So St. Bernard, whose speech flows sweet like honey, whenever he dwells on this sacred mystery.

*Peroration:* Hail to the soul that has tasted of the fruit of Redemption. The heavenly light of faith shines for her so mildly; she "sees the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John i, 14); she hopes in him who "is come to seek to save that which was lost" (Lk. xix, 10); who with the oil of mercy heals the contrite of hearts; she rejoices, because the Son of God has chosen her to be co-heiress of his kingdom.

J. MARCHANT.

## Sunday Within the Octave of Christmas.

### I.

### DEVOTE YOURSELF TO GOD FROM YOUR EARLY YOUTH.

In congratulating Simeon and Anna on having seen the salvation of Israel, we should not overlook, that by long preparation and longing, they made themselves worthy of embracing the Saviour. If you desire the same happiness, make the same preparation. Do not defer it to your old age, but in order to insure the friendship of your Saviour for your old age, devote yourself to him from your youth. Ye children and all youth take it to your mind; take it to your heart ye parents and guardians: if you want to see those committed to your care in the embrace of Jesus, lead them to him, whilst they are young. Like Mary, present them to God, and induce them to present themselves to God, like Jesus. For:

PART I.

Presentation and devotion of yourself to Jesus from your youth is a sacrifice exceedingly welcome to God.

1. God has a predilection for youth and selects them as his instruments to attain his designs. Joseph, a youth, was chosen to be "Saviour of the world," saving entire nations from starvation. By David, the shepherd-boy, God slew the Philistines; by Daniel he protected the innocent and saved the life of Susanna; St. Stephen is elevated to the great honor of being the protomartyr of Christendom.

2. Because the young are eminently fit for heaven. "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to me, for the kingdom of heaven is for such." Mtt. xix, 14. Jesus tenderly loved John the Baptist as being destined and trained for his holy service from his mother's womb. Because an affectionate youth, John *rests on His breast.* Jesus looking on the youth desirous of receiving life everlasting "loved him." Mark x, 21. Even the feeble will was an attraction for Jesus;

3. So much themore does he value the real self-sacrifice of the youth, the devotion to him from childhood, being

*a.* Firstlings. "Abel offered of the firstlings of his flock, and the Lord had respect to Abel and his offerings." Gen. iv, 4. The tender years, the fervent sentiments of childhood are the firstlings. "Who dissipates his youth, and in old age turns to God, offers fruits, of which the sweetest have been tasted by the devil, and ears, the best grain of which has been taken by him." St. Thom. Aqu.

*b.* A sacrifice free from selfishness. Enthusiastic love and sacred fear are the principal motives. Conversions in advanced age are commonly caused by servile fear, by the taste of the sinner's miserable life, by bitter experience and disgust. Example of the Prodigal Son.

*c.* A stainless sacrifice—not profaned with sin—not disgraced by impurity or tepidity. "If you offer the blind for sacrifice * * * and the lame and the sick, is it not evil?" Malach i, 8.

4. A sacrifice of important consequence, being an example for others. Vide iv Kings xxii, Sq. All the people idolaters, the altar of Jehova deserted, the warnings of the prophets not listened to. In those days of the devil's reign, God puts Josias on David's throne, who, a mere youth as he was, hastens into the temple, deplores in a sackcloth the abomination; and matters turn in Israel; by his example the people were converted. Indeed, the pious youth confounds the adult, attracts the young, banishes levity, confirms the just in their virtue, "Potuerunt hi, potuerunt hae, cur non tu Augustine?"

Well, then, gladden the heart of Jesus by your sacrifice, and remember that:

PART II.

It is very wholesome for you to devote yourself from your youth to Jesus and his service.

1. Because you are led to perfection, which is the true beauty and riches of man.

*a.* Virtue is a tree that strikes deeper roots in young hearts; greater susceptibility; fewer storms, internally and externally.

The coldness and miseries of life are not so much felt. The soul not enervated by passions, nor petrified by custom and stupidity. How different with mature and old age!

*b.* The stem of this tree is harder and more solid. Spring of life is full of juice. Virtue, like vice, is hardened into habit and passion. Virtue becomes more solid because of the conscience being more tender, opposition against sin being more decided, and the love towards God more intense. Example of Tobias. "He remained just and righteous, for when he was younger than any of the tribe of Nephthali, yet did he no childish thing in his work * * * These things did he observe when but a boy." Tob. i, 4—8. Hence his virtue was solid. The conversion of old age is often unstable. The cup of lust tasted, the flesh-pots of Egypt will incite his desire, the contracted weakness of will and flesh is prone to succumb.

*c.* This tree bears more delicious fruits and in greater measure. Though every good work is acceptable to God, yet the works of advanced age being preceded by a sinful life, are less agreeable, because grown on a tree that once was bad. The wine first taken from the press is the most delicious. Virtue is an art acquired by exercise. Exercise in younger years strengthens ability, consequently there are more products. He that begins late has a heavy step; he that was devoted to God's service from his youth, will, "like to the roe, and to the young hart," (Cant. viii, 14,) fly over all obstacles in his way.

God surely sets as prop to this tree the grace of perseverance. "Even to your old age I am the same, * * * I will carry and will save" (you). Isa. xlvi, 4.

2. Because you will gain happiness here on earth, by

The inner peace, the consciousness of being God's friend.

The prospect of proximate, abundant, eternal reward.

The love and esteem of all who are of good will.

3. Happiness in the next world. "Those who serve God from their youth, depart in security of their salvation, what is no little boon." St. Thomas Aqu. Breathing their last in the embrace of Jesus, they fly up to Jesus, and, not being defiled,

they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Apoc. xiv, 4. What happiness, honor and reward!

*Peroration:* Now then, O childhood, O youth, represent yourselves as perpetual sacrifice to Jesus. Ye parents present them to him,—to virtue, to happiness.

QUERICO ROSSI.

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## II.

## CONSEQUENCES OF GOOD EDUCATION.

Mary is the happiest mother, because she carried in her arms the best child. Where is there a father, or a mother who would not desire to have good children? This very wish was expressed over them by the Holy Church, when they knelt at the altar to be united in the bonds of matrimony. This wish and blessing of the Church is often frustrated by the parents themselves. And yet they would find urgent motives to realize the wish of the Church, if they would consider the happy results of giving a wise and religious education to their children.

### PART I.

### CONSEQUENCES TO THE PARENTS.

Children well educated are:

1. An *honor* to their parents.

Their good name reflects on those who educated them. How great an honor was conferred by Joseph, David, Susanna, etc., upon their parents!

They keep the Fourth Commandment, honoring their parents, and not being ashamed of them.

On the contrary "a son ill taught is the confusion of the father, and a daughter * * that confoundeth, becometh a disgrace to her father." Eccles. xxii, 3, 4.

2. Their *joy*, *consolation* and *help* in every condition of life. "A wise son maketh the father glad; but a foolish son is the sorrow of his mother." Prov. x, 1. Joseph and Tobias were the props of their parents in their declining age. Heli's sons caused their father's death.

3. The *eternal crown* of their parents. The parable of the talents would be here in place.

PART II.

CONSEQUENCES TO THE CHILDREN.

Parents wish nothing more than to see their children happy. Now it is on good education that

1. Their temporal happiness depends.

Bequeath millions to your child, without virtue he will never be happy. Herod.

If you can give him nothing but a good education and piety, he will find his way through life; for contentment renders man rich, and good children receive divine blessing.

2. Their *eternal* happiness.

You have planted for heaven, and in heaven, therefore, you will reap your reward.

There is no dowry to be compared to this. Be of good cheer, you who are poor. It is in your power to provide for your children, that their souls will be chosen brides of Jesus Christ.

How heartily they will thank you in heaven, whilst spoiled children will curse their parents in hell.

PART III.

CONSEQUENCES TO POSTERITY.

The great importance of good education will be more manifest, by reflecting on its consequences:

1. In regard to the *family*. "The generation of the righteous shall be blessed. Glory and wealth shall be in his house, and his justice remaineth forever and ever." Ps. cxi, 2, 3. Therefore temporal and spiritual blessing shall be hereditary. Innumerable proofs of this promise are afforded by experience. The Kainites and Sethites.

2. In regard to *civil society*.

Good and bad morals are rapidly spread and are kept up for a long time.

Every historian avows that the great immorality in the history of nations, for instance of the French nation in the last

century, was the result of perverse education. And is not in our own country the corruption of morals the necessary result of our system of private and public education? We cannot hope for the welfare of nations save from a better education of youth. Hence the eagerness of infidels, secret societies, etc., to have the control of the schools.

3. Our Holy *Church* in consequence of Christian education will have

Many holy members for generations to come. "For if the first-fruit be holy, so is the mass also; and if the root be holy, so are the branches." Rom. xi, 16.

Holy priests. The word of the prophet is often applicable: "And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest." Isa. xxiv, 2. "Calling to mind that faith which is in thee unfeigned, which also dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice, and I am certain that in thee also." II Tim. i, 5.

In countries where tepidity in faith and materialism prevails, there is scarcity of priests, whilst in religious ages and regions many good youth receive Holy Orders. Importance of the seminaries recommended by the Council of Trent. Exhortation to assist the bishop in keeping them up. You may also say something about colleges and academies conducted by religious communities.

*Peroration:* Good, religious education therefore is of so great a consequence that not only parents, but entire communities, nay nations, should make it the object of their earnest study and continual care. TIRINUS.

## New Year's Day.

### I.
### GREETING.

On this day we have urgent reasons to offer up to Almighty God the Holy Sacrifice as an offering of thanksgiving for the innumerable benefits and graces received during the past year, and as an offering of petition to implore blessing and grace for the ensuing year. We may have the greatest assurance that our Lord will grant our petitions and desires, if we fulfil with fidelity the desires he has upon us. According to my vocation as interpreter of God's Will, I will make known to you what are God's designs in regard to his children on this day.

#### PART I.

#### DESIGNS IN REGARD TO FAMILIES.

"If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, you have your choice; choose this day that which pleaseth you; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Thus Josue addressed the people, "and the people answered, and said: God forbid we should leave the Lord, and serve strange gods." Josue xxiv, 15, 16. I wish to God, Josue's declaration could be applied to every house, that every house might be a house of God. For a house of God there is required:

1. *Beauty.* "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of thy house; and the place where thy glory dwelleth." Ps. xxv, 8. This beauty consists in the fear of God, in faith, hope and charity, good intention, and acquiescence in the will of God. "It is good for me to adhere to God." Ps. lxxii, 28. "If anyone love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make an abode with him." John xiv, 23.

2. *Sacrifices and prayers.* In Christian houses a morning and night offering is made by saying common prayers; also a grace offering by saying prayers before and after meals, and recollecting the poor. "Pray and work," is the device in Christian fam-

ilies, and whenever it is possible, the members attend divine service in Church.

3. The father, assisted by the mother, is the interpreter of God's will, wherefore they should *instruct*, *exhort* and *punish* their children, and set a good example, by leading a Christian life. They should not suffer the honor of God to be despised under their roof by cursing, blaspheming, etc., and insist on a regular reception of the holy Sacraments.

4. *Religious pictures*, especially the *Crucifix*, images of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints to awaken pious thoughts and resolutions. Scandalous pictures should be destroyed like idols, the destruction of which God has commanded. Good books contribute a good deal towards leading a Christian life, whilst bad books should not be tolerated. "And many of those who had followed curious things, brought their books together and burnt them before all: and the price of them being computed, they found the money to be fifty thousand pieces of silver." Act. xix, 19.

In such houses there is grace, blessing, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost.

## PART II.

### DESIGNS FOR EVERY STATE OF LIFE.

1. That all *priests* might be filled with the spirit of God, lead many to salvation, and find many who earnestly desire to be led to salvation.

2. That all *superiors* might treat their subjects with charity, justice, and equity, mindful of our being the children of the same Father in heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with him. Eph. vi, 9. That all subjects might perform their duties with fidelity and zeal.

3. That in *parents* as well as *children* the promises of the Fourth Commandment might be fulfilled.

4. That the *youth* in their privileged state of life might be an ornament to the Church, as sanctified temples of God beware of all contamination, "and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences." Rom. xiii, 14.

5. That all living in the *married state* should be mindful of its high importance and sacramental dignity. Eph. v, 22 ff. Col. iii, 18. I Pet. iii, 2 ff.

6. That the *rich* might beware of haughtiness and abuse of God's gifts, but use them for God's honor and consolation of the poor. That the poor and afflicted might offer up to God their poverty and sorrows, resist the dangers of their condition by industry, honesty and forbearance, remembering the Lord who says: "Come to me, all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you," etc. Mtt. xi. 28–30.

7. That the *sick* might turn their eyes toward him who wounds to heal, who chastises to save your souls; toward him who suffered on the Cross. That they might not delay or omit the reception of the Sacraments, and that those who enjoy health, might assist their bodies and their souls.

8. That to those who may *depart* this life in the present year God may grant a happy death, and be to them a propitious judge. And as we may be amongst their number, that we might always be prepared to die the death of a Christian.

9. Finally to those who have left us in the past year: "Eternal rest give unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them," and that the living may remember them in their prayers, in the Holy Sacrifice and by charitable works.

And as every good gift comes from above, I comprise all these wishes in the one: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." I Thess. v, 28. BISHOP HILLE.

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## II.

## ON THE NECESSITY AND MEANS OF WORKING OUT OUR SALVATION.

As members of the human family we celebrate the First Day of the New Year, as members of the Church we are reminded of the Circumcision of Jesus Christ. The beginning of the New Year calls to our mind the necessity of working out our salvation, whilst the day of Circumcision teaches us the manner in which we ought to work out our salvation.

PART I.

By New Year's day we are reminded of the necessity imposed upon us to work out our salvation.

A good portion of our lifetime granted to us for the exclusive purpose of saving our soul has passed away, and perhaps a very short space yet remains to us to work out our salvation. We are then warned by the renewing of the year: Save your soul. For it is

1. Our first and most important task. Departing time cries out to you:

*a.* Time and and all that is connected with time, is transient as the joys and goods of this life. It is all like a dream. How foolish to hunt after perishable things at the expense of the one necessary thing, viz.: eternity and everlasting riches.

*b.* Earthly things cannot make you contented and happy. Even on earth they cannot give you real happiness. But if experience teaches us every day that the eye is not satiated by seeing, and the ear is not satiated by hearing, that everything is vanity, how imprudent is it then to care for earthly things, and to neglect your immortal soul!

2. Our most urgent task, which therefore cannot be delayed. For

*a.* Time is short. "It remaineth * * that they who use this world, be as if they used it not." I Cor. vii, 29 ff. What is human life in comparison to eternity? How important its destiny! Who will defer a great enterprise for which he has not much time given him?

*b.* Time is uncertain. When Moses counted the people in the desert, they numbered 600,000 valiant men. When he counted them after 37 years again, there was about the same number, but of those counted the first time only two men were yet alive. And how many amongst us have been in this church 37 years ago? How many will have left us after another year? Who promised us the to-morrow? And you would trust your salvation to a future so uncertain?

*c.* Time is past recovery. Who can revoke one hour of the

name was preached, as in Rome, Japan, etc., the light of Christianity shone.

2. Confidence. Jesus our mediator and intercessor with the Father. Whatever you ask in this name, it shall be granted to you.

3. Grace. The holy Sacraments receive their efficacy from the merits of Jesus. He is the Lord over all, rich to all that call upon him. For "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Rom. x, 12.

4. Devotion. Who is ignorant of the fact, that the Saints pronounced and invoked this Holy Name with great piety? "It is honey to my mouth, song to my ear." St. Bernard.

5. Blessing in all things, in tribulations of body and soul. "In my name they shall cast out devils," etc. Mark xvi, 17 f. Cf. Act. iv, 12.

*Peroration:* Enter then into the New Year in the name of Jesus and work out your salvation in good earnest.

HOUF.

## Sunday After New Year's Day.

### I
### THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT AND RETURN.

The Sacred Writers do not intend to satisfy the curiosity of pious people. But those few traces of the juvenile life of our Saviour, recorded by them, are of great importance and exceedingly edifying. So is the flight of Jesus into Egypt very instructive to the Christian mind.

PART I.

What does the flight into Egypt teach us?

I. JESUS WAS OBLIGED TO FLEE.

1. How does faith consist therewith? The faith in his divine mission, in his divinity, wisdom and omnipotence? Is fleeing not unworthy of him who said: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth?" Mt. xxviii, 18.

2. Does it not shake our hope? The hope in him who said: "Come to me, all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." Mt. xi, 28. "Jesus should be the refuge of sinners, and flees; the help of all, and hides himself; the strength and defence of all, and retires without defending himself?" St. Chrysostom. All these objections amount to nothing, if you reflect on the motive,

II. WHY HE FLED, NOT ON ACCOUNT OF FEEBLENESS, BUT IN ORDER TO PROVE:

1. That the prophecies might be fulfilled in him. "That it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Out of Egypt have I called my son." Mt. ii, 15. Osee xi, 1.

2. That the types might be fulfilled in him. The Israelitic people are the type of the Lord. Both fled into Egypt to escape death. There liberty dawned upon Israel, and upon the whole world. There we see the *typical* as well as the *real* Paschal Lamb.

3. That he is the Saviour of the world. Egypt represents paganism. He came for all. The "true light" is to arise for all mankind.

4. That he is the guide on the royal way of the cross. He that gives up everything, his home, himself, will enter into his kingdom.

5. That his business is to seek immortal souls. A heart-stirring picture—the wandering homeless child! It is you too with whom he will abide, seeking refuge and protection. Open your heart to him in faith and charity, receive him. He will repay you by his grace, as he repaid Egypt that will soon excel the whole world in sanctity. So many human hearts remain shut to him for ever, whilst he could return to Israel at last.

PART II.

What his return teaches us.

His return is very instructive.

I. ITS CAUSE.

The death of proud and cruel Herod. God's plan was carried out in spite of his machinations. Another illustration of the words of the Psalmist: "The kings of the earth stood up * * against the Lord, and against his Christ * * He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them." Ps. ii, 2. Thus the sinner resists in vain the will of God, Herod's fate will be his fate.

II. THE RETURN ITSELF.

1. It affords a proof of God's fidelity, the motive of our hope. The Jews, as the sons of the free, had received the promise that they should obtain the first blessing of Messiah. Therefore, though expelled and in anticipation of being rejected again, he returns. A great consolation indeed!

2. An example of Evangelical prudence. Jesus avoids the dominion of Archelaus. Learn, O man, to shun the danger and occasion of sin. Flee from the sinner and the comrades of the sinner. Why is it that so small a number reach their eternal home?

III. THE END OF THE JOURNEY—NAZARETH.

1. That the Scriptures be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene; i. e., a despised. "Despised, and the most abject of

men." Is., liii, 3. And the "Holy, that is devoted to God." Is. xi, 1—5.

2. That he may sanctify our humilation for his sake. "Blessed shall you be when men * * * shall separate you, and shall reproach you * * * for the son of man's sake." Lk. vi, 22.

3. That he may recommend us to love solitude and retirement. In Nazareth he led a hidden life; it is in solitude that he grew in wisdom and grace. Seek retirement in your own heart by habitual calling to mind the presence of God, and continually conversing with him, as a good child with his father.

*Peroration:* Take a delight in meditating on the childhood of Jesus. "Nobody will see me in my greatness, unless he has seen me in my littleness," said the child Jesus to St. Agnes of Foligny.

BISHOP DINKEL.

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## II

## THE GREAT MALICE OF MORTAL SIN.

The name Herod represents to the Christian mind a tyrannical, selfish, cold, frivolous monster. The Holy Fathers are not in the wrong, when they see in him the semblance or representative of mortal sin, whilst Joseph represents to them the model of the just man, as being in incessant fear of and solicitous flight from it. Though the Old Tiger died, his son makes him tremble for the divine child's safety, he will not approach his dangerous proximity. And the Christian facing the danger of a mortal sin—how careless! Why? "With desolation is all the land made desolate: because there is none that considereth in the heart." Jerem. xii, 11, *i. e.* there is none that considers in his heart the formidableness of mortal sin.

### PART I.

Mortal sin is an offense against God's majesty and dignity.

#### I. OF HIS MAJESTY.

Any valid law of divine or human origin, binds your conscience in obedience. He that refuses to obey, sins against

God. "There is no power but from God * * * he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." Rom. xiii, 1, 2. Therefore

1. Sin is a revolt against God. What an outrage, when I reflect on

*a.* God. He is the almighty Creator of the universe, its sovereign Lord and Master. "The Lord is a great God, and a great king above all gods. For in his hand are all the ends of the earth: and the heights of the mountains are his." Ps. xciv, 2, 3. "All nations are before him as if they had no being at all." Isa. xl, 17.

*b.* The Angels. Exalted beings as they are, they tremble at the voice of his mouth; cover their countenance and fulfill his will as quick as lightning. Cf. the celestial visions of Ezechiel, Daniel and Apocal. How great is their humility, obedience, reverence!

*c.* All nature. The smallest things in nature acknowledge God's supreme power. The worlds above us, the revolution of times. "By thy ordinance, the day goeth on: for all things serve thee." Ps. cxviii, 91.

*d.* The sinner. It is the sinner alone who brings discord in the universal harmony, revolts against the Most High, saying by his action, "I will not obey." And who is he that dares thus? Created and kept alive by God; a helpless worm, the prey of one moment, the original nothing. Moreover, under baptismal seal assigned to Jesus with his sacred blood, bound to Jesus by personal vows. How dreadful a felony, how abominable a perjury, how ungrateful a revolt is mortal sin?

2. Mortal sin is also a boundless contempt of God.

The sinner exalts on the altar, in place of God, the spirit of the world, the flesh and pride prefers the shadow of honor, the reeling of a few moments, a handful of dust, to God and his eternal happiness; betrays and sells him at a Judas' price, sets at naught the threats of God—how shameless!

II. NO LESS IS THE OFFENSE TO GOD'S BENIGNITY.

1. Dreadful ingratitude.

"Come and hear * * * and I will tell you what great things he has done for my soul." Ps. lxv, 16. "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" I Cor. iv, 7. Not long ago you were a mere nothing, now you are—you are man, God's image and likeness. A work of art as regards your body, the crown of the visible creation. And your soul! Nourished with infinite love; destined and enabled for great things; overflowing with blessings and graces. Think of the benevolent actions of Jesus Christ in his mortal life, and in his Church all the time. "What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard that I have not done to it." Isa. v, 4. And whoever commits mortal sin, blasphemes his Heavenly Father, trifles with his love, tramples under foot the blood of Jesus Christ.

2. Devilish malignity.

The sinner abuses the gifts of nature and grace, in defiance of God's love, in detriment of his kingdom. All his faculties are turned into fire-brands, into paricidal daggers.

What a monster is mortal sin!

PART II.

Therefore frightful as the object of divine vengeance.

From God's hatred of sin and the punishment thereof you may infer its monstrosity.

I. GOD PERSECUTED SIN WITH

1. Sacred hatred.

The evil deed cries to heaven for vengence; God regrets to have made man. "To God the wicked and his wickedness are hateful alike." Wisd. xiv, 9. As light is inimical to darkness, life to death, so God to sin.

2. Severe punishment.

Call to mind:

*a.* The punishment of the *sinful angels* and our *First Parents.* Upon the perpetrator and all his descendants God pours out the cup of his wrath. The earth full of calamities, one large hospital, stained with blood—result of *one* mortal sin.

*b.* The punishment of others. History teaches you that there is no peace for the wicked. Remember the deluge, the destruction of the four cities, Israel's repeated chastising, the punishment of individuals. Now descend and see with horror

*c.* The full punishment in *hell.* The worm, fire, wailing, desperation, increpations, blasphemies. Dreadful torments for one mortal sin, of which perhaps you are partakers. And who are the spirits of revenge below? Angels, condemned for one mortal sin—and forever. Consider

*d.* The punishment of Christ the bearer of our sins. God's Son suffers! Look in his face. He sheds the last drop of his sacred blood in expiation of mortal sin.

II. MORTAL SIN IN RELATION TO YOUR SOUL, IS

1. A robber. Takes away peace, the good works and merits.

2. *A tyrant.* Man becomes a slave of sin, in habituating himself to it.

3. *A murderer.* The soul is dead to God, to the benefits of redemption, to the holy angels, to eternal happiness. O evil of all evils!

*Peroration:* O brother, tremble, deliver yourself from mortal sin by sincere penance. Shun sin like a rattlesnake, as Joseph fled from Herod. Shun the danger, be faithful in little things, or you will lose Jesus, yourself, everything.

JAMES WHEELER.

# The Epiphany.

## I

## THE JOURNEY OF THE WISE MEN.

Whilst our Lord invited the shepherds, members of a faithful people, to come to his manger, the Wise Men, the firstlings of the gentiles, were invited by a star. Seeing the star, they remembered Balaam's prophecy. (Numb. xxiv, 17.) And an inward light of grace illuminated them. They were obedient and showed great courage, as they were detained neither by the dangers or hardships of the journey, nor by the quizzing of their neighbors. Let us, in spirit, accompany them on their journey, and see what occurred to them at Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

### I. THE WISE MEN AT JERUSALEM.

There we see divers persons, to wit:

1. Herod.

*a.* He is frightened and alarmed. He trembles before a child. Effect of a bad conscience. The wicked mind is never quiet, not even on the throne.

*b.* He lays out plans of crudelity and hypocrisy. Is there a means so vulgar that would not be employed by the wicked in carrying out their designs? But God brings them all to nothing. The child sought for is not found, but glorified and saved. Herod is more hated as the murderer of innocent children, and soon reached by divine vengeance.

2. The Chief Priests and Scribes.

*a.* Mark their learning. They do not hesitate one moment to quote the right text to give accurate information as to the Saviour's birth-place. Therefore the prophecies of the Messiah are confirmed by their testimony.

*b.* Mark their blindness. They show the right way to others, they themselves are careless; they lead others to the Messiah, they themselves do not adore him; they take no notice of him, and go at last so far as to persecute him. Melancholy

perversity, if the masters of the nation contradict their own doctrine by their bad example! In such cases we should imitate the Magi, who regarded the doctrine, and not the example.

3. The inhabitants of Jerusalem.

They were troubled together with Herod.

*a.* What levity and servility!

They do not know why they should be troubled; but to see Herod troubled is to them a sufficient motive of being troubled also. How pernicious is the bad example of those holding a higher position in life!

*b.* What folly!

They are troubled concerning that which should give joy; their most ardent wishes fulfilled, the golden era of the chosen people inaugurated. Alas! have we not reason to complain of Christians being troubled about what should be the cause of their greatest joy, as the necessity of confession, Holy Communion, etc.

4 The Wise Men. Mark the contrast.

*a.* Their manliness.

They are not afraid, from what has been revealed to them, to appear before the king, and manifest to him their faith and desire to adore him that was born king of the Jews, though they knew that they would touch his ambition. Christians are often lacking in courage to profess their faith freely, to show publicly their exercises of devotion.

*b.* Their perseverance.

They would not give up their design, notwithstanding the many difficulties and trials. The star disappears, and they inquire; they are shown to an obscure place, and they are satisfied. Nobody goes with them, many may have ridiculed them, they go alone. How little is it sometimes that makes us forget all our resolutions.

*c.* Their joy at seeing the star again.

In the wicked city the heavenly light could not shine; but God would not let his faithful servants be without light for a long time. O that we might (1) shun the society of the wicked

so as not to be deprived of divine inspirations in the bustle of the world, and (2) that we might be persevering in good works, though God may apparently leave us in darkness for a time; the appearance of the star of grace will fill our hearts with much greater joy.

II. THE WISE MEN AT BETHLEHEM.

1. Their faith is exemplary.

*a.* What do they find?

They find a child in a stable by the side of a poor mother. And this child should be the great king for whom they had undertaken the long and weary journey.

*b.* Whom do they profess this child to be.

They fall down before him and adore him, for they see in him the king of kings. How great illumination and humility of faith is required not to be scandalized by what they see. They find their God in a stable, whilst we know him in splendid churches; they adore a weeping child, whilst we know him glorified; they are the firstlings elected from the gentiles, whilst we are educated under the influence of Christianity.

2. Their gifts.

Being selected by divine inspiration, they were always considered as indicating great mysteries.

*a.* From a dogmatic view gold indicates the king of the universe, before whom they bowed; frankincense signifies God, whom they adore; myrrh signifies the passible man who suffers for our sins.

*b.* From a moral view gold signifies the ardent love of God and man; frankincense the duty of incessant prayer, and the zeal for God's house and divine service; myrrh signifies our self-mortification, and assistance given to the suffering and dying.

*Peroration:* They did not return to Herod, but they went back another way into their own country. If we desire to be truly converted, we must not return to Herod, to Satan, to sin and to the proximate occasion of sin. Even Satan does not object to our receiving the holy sacraments of penance and com-

munion, if we walk in the old ways of sin again; if, after visiting Jesus, we give him up to the murderer Herod.

L'Evangile médité.

## II.

## GIFTS TO BE OFFERED BY EVERY CHRISTIAN.

"Opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts, gold, frankincense and myrrh;" significative gifts in regard to Christ, whom they recognize in this child as their king, as true God and man; significative in regard to us, too, because it is from them that we learn what offerings we should bring to our Saviour. "My son, give me thy heart," Prov. xxiii, 26, are his words directed to us. But the gifts of the Wise Men tell us that this heart ought to resemble gold, frankincense and myrrh, that is to say, we should offer up to our God:

### PART I.

### A HEART BURNING WITH LOVE.

Our heart should be like gold; i. e., should burn with love of God and our neighbor.

1. Gold is the most precious of metals.

Christian love is the princess of virtues, the principal of the three divine virtues. Arguments:

*a.* From Holy Scripture.

"And now there remains hope, faith and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." I Cor. xiii, 13. "Above all things have charity, which is the bond of perfection." Col. iii, 14. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii, 10. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of the angels, and have no charity, I am become as sounding brass, or as tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge; and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have no charity, it profiteth me nothing." I Cor., xiii, 1, 2.

*b.* From the doctrine of the Fathers and Saints.

"As many branches proceed from the roots, so many virtues proceed from the root of charity. And as the branches lose their life, by the root being destroyed, so all virtues cease blooming by the love being taken away." St. Greg. As the coal, unless being inflamed, is of no use, so the soul, destitute of charity." St. Bern.

2. Gold glitters with beautiful splendor, wherefore it is so precious.

Love must also shine, must manifest itself:

*a.* As love of God.

We must take a delight to turn our mind to God, to praise and invoke him, observe his commandments with joyfulness. Or did he not deserve our love? Look at him in the Manger, on the Cross, in the Blessed Sacrament. "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." I Cor. xvi, 22.

*b.* As love of our neighbor.

Let the light of your love shine before your fellow-men by good works. Every work of charity is a sacrifice offered at the feet of the divine infant. "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." Mtt. xxv, 40.

3. It is by fire that gold receives its splendor and real value.

Our love must also be subjected to a trial of fire :

*a.* The love of God in sufferings and tribulations, if you accept them at God's hands with resignation. True love will strengthen you in doing so, for "love is strong as death." Cant. viii, 6. "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? * * * For I am sure that neither death, nor life * * * nor things present nor things to come * * * shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. viii, 35, ff.

*b.* The love of your neighbor, which you must prove by forgiving offences of your enemies, and by living in peace. Follow the example of Stephen, Act, vii, 59, and other Saints.

PART II.

A DEVOUT HEART.

Like the Angel in Apoc. viii, 3, we stand before the altar on which Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament has put up his throne of grace. Our heart is the golden censer, our prayer is the incense; with the priest we should pray: "Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight." Ps. cxl, 2.

Incense is the emblem of prayer.

1. The smoke of the incense ascends, the prayer ascends up before God.

"What else is prayer but the ascending of the soul from the earth into heaven, but a searching for what is above, and a longing for invisible things?" St. Aug. "By prayer the ascension of Christ into heaven is represented, for what else does praying mean than lifting up your mind towards heaven." Card. Hugo. But there are several conditions which are to be fulfilled, if you desire that your prayer may ascend to heaven, viz:

*a.* The prayer must come from a pure heart.

"God had respect to Abel and his offerings, but to Cain and his offerings he had no respect." Gen. iv, 4.

*b.* It must come from a devout heart. For if you turn your heart away from God, it is only your lips that pray. "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." Mtt. xv, 8.

*c.* You must pray chiefly for spiritual or heavenly gifts. If you pray exclusively or chiefly for earthly blessings, your prayer being tied to the earth, cannot ascend heavenward.

2. By its sweet scent the efficacy of prayer is signified.

"This incense blessed by thee, may ascend to thee, O Lord, and thy mercy may descend to us," is the prayer of the officiating priest.

Holy Scripture invites us to prayer by reason of its efficacy.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee." Ps. xlix, 15. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." Mt. vii, 7. "And all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive." Mtt. xxi, 22.

PART III.

A PENITENT HEART.

1. Myrrh is a bitter plant and signifies penance and self-mortification, which consists

*a.* In subduing the bad inclinations of your soul. It is a necessary struggle. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Mtt. xvi, 24. It is a struggle of long duration, for "the life of man upon earth is a warfare, and his days are like the days of an hireling." Job, vii, 1. The human heart is to be compared to a garden: you must make constant use of the hoe of mortification to subdue the weeds. "Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations, and over kingdoms to root up, and to pull down, and to waste, and to destroy." Jerem. i, 10.

*b.* In mortifying our bodily senses, which is recommended by the example of Jesus Christ, to whom the words may be applied: "I will go to the mountain of myrrh." Cant. iv, 6. When he was a child, they offered to him myrrh, and his last drink was bitterness. By the example of his disciples. "They who are Christ's have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences." Gal. v, 24. "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest * * * I myself should become reprobate." I Cor. ix, 27. It is exercised by restraining your eyes, ears, tongue, etc., and by patiently bearing the tribulations of life, it being a daily sacrifice of myrrh.

2. As myrrh protects against rottenness, so mortification protects against corruption of sin. "Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought: for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sins." I Pet. iv, 1. By mortification your body is prepared for a glorious resurrection, anointed, as it were, for incorruption.

*Peroration:* Let us then offer with the Wise Men gold, frankincense and myrrh. Let us go with them to Bethlehem, the house of bread, and there offer to our Saviour under the form of bread, a heart filled with love, devotion and penance.

L. MEHLER.

## First Sunday after the Epiphany.

### I.

### THE HOLY FAMILY.

It is a pious legend, that St. Luke, an artist, as he was, painted several pictures representing Jesus and Mary; but it is quite certain that, with pen and ink, he drew fine pictures of the youth of Jesus: the message brought by the Archangel to the blessed Virgin, the birth of the Saviour, his circumcision and presentation, etc. In short it is the Holy Family that is carefully represented to our spiritual eyes by the Evangelist. And the Holy Family is a model for all Christian families; a pattern for universal imitation.

PART I.

THE DOMESTIC VIRTUES OF THE HOLY FAMILY.

1. *Fear of God*, as is manifested

*a.* By their journey to Jerusalem, made by Mary the tender virgin, though not obliged by law, and by Jesus hardly yet bound by law. How troublesome a journey for them! An admonition for Christian families not to stay away from the service on Sundays and Holidays, to observe the regulations of the Church for Lent, etc.

*b.* In the temple and on their way to and from Jerusalem, when they certainly offered the most agreeable sacrifices of devotion and love. Endeavor, father and mother, to edify and spur on the inmates of your house by great devotion in Church, frequent reception of the holy Sacraments, etc.

*c.* In the quiet house of Nazareth by the continual sacrifices of prayer and meditation. How beautiful and consoling is the aspect of a family, where common prayers are said! God's blessing rests upon them. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Josue xxiv, 15.

2. Their *activity.*

*a.* St. Joseph was a carpenter and found the support of the Holy Family by handwork. Mary managed the household.

Jesus was assisting both of them. "A carpenter and a carpenter's son." The excuse, that exercises of devotion are made impossible by the daily business, is unfounded. The Holy Family is a model for you in this regard. "Thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands: blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee." Ps. cxxvii, 2.

*b.* They were united in their daily work; they were obliged by poverty to labor, as well as by God's holy will. Confidence in God made them to be content with little. In every family cooperation should alleviate the burden of labor, excite activity from early age. All members of the family should be animated with a great confidence in God. "Be not solicitous * * what you shall eat * * what you shall put on," etc. Mtt. vi, 25–31.

3. *Peaceableness and meekness.*

*a.* When Jesus was lost, Mary did not reproach Joseph, nor did Joseph reproach Mary; they consoled each other. Married people should bear misfortunes with resignation and console each other over the death of a child, over sickness in the family, etc. It is a relief for afflictions and sufferings.

*b.* When Jesus was found, how meek were the words uttered by his mother, though her heart had been bleeding! And the obedience of Jesus in the house of his Father, how punctual! "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Ps. cxxxii, 1, 2.

PART II.

THE CHARACTERISTIC VIRTUES OF THE SINGLE PERSONS.

1. Joseph was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile; a model of all men:

*a.* As for his *willingness* to yield to God's arrangements v. g. not to leave Mary, to flee into Egypt, etc.

*b.* As for his amiable *care for Jesus and Mary.* Their wishes, joys and afflictions were his wishes, etc.; the labor was principally his part. "Behold, a man by name Joseph * * a good and just man." St. Luke xxiii, 50.

2. Mary who was full of grace, was a model to all women:

*a.* As for her *innocence*, resignation and humility. These virtues are mild stars in the night of temptation and affliction.

*b.* As for *discretion* and *love of retirement.* Who knows more necessary, but at the same time rarer virtues for a Christian woman? "Who shall find a valiant woman? far, and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her." Prov. xxxi, 10 sqq.

3. Jesus is your model, ye sons and daughters.

*a.* As for his conduct at the *temple school.* He manifested his knowledge, but without ostentation.

*b.* As for his *obedience.* "He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject to them." Luke x, 51. Obedience is the touchstone of the inner value of a child, the path to wisdom, to happiness. "Much better is obedience, than the victims of fools." Eccle. iv, 17.

*c.* As for his *increasing in wisdom and grace.* How often have we to complain of the opposite!

*Peroration:* Remember often the Holy Family at Nazareth. Jesus, Mary and Joseph may live in your hearts.

WEINZIERL.

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## II.

## HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER.

"And he was subject to them." St. Luke ii, 51. How significant a sentence! "God, whom the angels obey, is subject to Joseph and Mary." St. Bernard. Children, behold your model, and learn from the example of Jesus to be subject to your parents.

### PART I.

Be subject to them in your heart, (by your will,) namely:

I. BY REVERENCE.—REVERENCE IS REQUIRED

1. *By the law of nature.*

*a.* God has planted in the hearts of men a reverential feeling towards those to whom they owe their lives. Hence even the heathens honor their parents.

*b.* Reverence is due to every superior from his subjects,

consequently due to parents from their children, because they are the God-given superiors of the children. "God hath made the father honorable to the children; and seeking the judgment of the mothers, hath confirmed it upon the children." Ecclus. iii, 3. "Because we received our life through them, we are bound to honor them more than our masters." St. Thom. Aq.

2. *By the duty of gratitude.*

The parents are, next to God, the greatest benefactors of their children; it is from them that they receive their garments, food, instruction. How troublesome is education! "Thou shalt honor thy mother all the days of her life." Tobias iv, 3.

3. *By an explicit commandment of God.*

"Honor thy father and thy mother," which is

*a.* The first commandment with promise.

"Honor thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest be long-lived upon earth." Ephes. vi, 3, 4. And it is at the same time

*b.* The most dreadful because of the threats imposed upon its violation. "Cursed be he that honoreth not his father and mother: and all the people shall say: Amen." Deut. lxxvii, 16.

II. BY LOVE.—LOVE IS REQUIRED

1. *By God himself.* The parents are of course included in the commandment of charity. God demands it under dreadful threats. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth the labor of his mother in bearing him, let the ravens of the brooks pick it out, and the young eagles eat it." Prov. xxx, 17.

2. *By reason.* Parents love their children, wherefore they deserve to be loved by them also; love demands return of love. The children of the gentiles love their parents. Æneas carried on his shoulders his old father out of Troy. Love is excited

3. *By the example* of good children, as Joseph of Egypt. Gen. xxvi; Solomon, III Kings ii. Jesus.

PART II.

BY WORK:

1. By obedience, which is required

1. *By nature.* The parents having the right to command, the children have the duty to obey. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is just." Ephes. vi, 1.

2. *By God himself.* "Children, hear the judgment of your father, and so do that you may be saved." Eccles. iii, 2. "Children obey your parents in all things, for this is pleasing to the Lord." Col. iii, 20. On God's command the people had to stone a stubborn son. Deut. xxi, 18-21.

II. By active charity

In their necessities. Children must

1. Bear their imperfections and infirmities. "He that curseth his father or mother, dying let him die." Leviticus xx, 9.

2. Console them in their adversities and relieve their wants, if necessary. Example of Joseph, Gen. xlv.

3. Assist them in their advanced age. "Son, support the old age of thy father, and grieve him not in his life: and if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not, when thou art in thy strength: for the relieving of the father shall not be forgotten." Eccles. iii, 14, 15.

4. In time of dangerous illness provide for spiritual and medical help.

5. Pray for them.

*Peroration:* If children would comply with these duties towards parents, their reward would be temporal and eternal happiness. WANSIDEL.

## Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

### I.

### HOW TO PROCURE MATRIMONIAL HAPPINESS.

It is reasonably supposed that the couple at Cana, whose marriage was honored by the divine presence of Jesus, and who received an extraordinary blessing on the day of their marriage, lived in peace and happiness. Would to God, the same could be said about every marriage. Our Christian couples too, at their entrance into married life, received by the Sacrament of Matrimony promises of divine benevolence, grace and blessing. But alas! the fulfillment of these promises is often not seen in life, because in consequence of the necessary conditions not being fulfilled, the effects of the Sacrament are frustrated. The conditions required for obtaining happiness in the state of matrimony partly precede, partly accompany married life.

PART I.

Preparation to the state of matrimony. It is folly to undertake anything of great importance without making due preparation. The necessary preparation for matrimony is threefold:

I. REMOTE.

It is made

1. By obtaining the fear of God and domestic virtues in early life. The hope to improve with ease your morals in married life is preposterous, ("*Do you gather* figs from thorns?") and refuted by experience.

2. By acquiring the necessary knowledge, and means for the support of the family.

3. By avoiding untimely acquaintances, and shunning dangerous occasions of sin. How can you expect matrimonial happiness, when the pillar and ground of true love, the mutual esteem, is taken away?

II. NEARER.

In the choice of a state of life, and in the choice of your companion

1. Consult God by fervent prayer, the salvation of your soul, your parents, and prudent friends. Bear in mind the sanctity of the married state, its design, duties and dangers, in order to guard against levity and bad intention.

2. Make a prudent and conscientious choice. Be not fascinated

*a.* With earthly goods. The married couple at Cana were poor, but they enjoyed Jesus' presence and blessing. Herod, though he possessed a kingdom, was unhappy. Cf. Ecclesiastus xxvi, 1–4.

*b.* With beauty. "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." Prov. xxxi, 30. Do not trust in future reformation of morals.

*c.* With secondary advantages. Consider first the principal point, and then by-matters. Above all avoid marriages discreditable in consequence of diversity of religion, age and education.

*d.* Consult your own heart and intellect, do not make a choice to favor your parents, etc.

### III. PROXIMATE.

You intend to be united to a person by the most sacred bonds of matrimony, to make her partaker of your joys, labors and sufferings, and to seal your union by a holy Sacrament. Therefore

1. Be sincere towards your intended. The disagreeable discoveries are made too late and are often the cause of great trouble.

2. Be careful in your preparation for the reception of the holy Sacrament: Live innocently whilst you are espoused, and betake yourself to fervent prayers. Sinful intercourse—in face of the holy Sacrament—resembles sacrilege and frustrates the effects of ecclesiastical blessings.

3. Keep holy thy wedding day. Invite Jesus and Mary, not allowing sinful enjoyments. If possible, have the nuptial Mass celebrated for you, during which you receive Holy Communion and the nuptial blessing. It is a grand idea, to have the cere-

monies of matrimony interwoven with the ceremonies and parts of the tremendous Sacrifice.

PART II.

Behavior in the married state.

From beginning of your new state of life filial fear of God be your guide for all your duties, adversities and dangers. "We are the children of Saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God;" thus spoke Tobias to his young wife, (Tob. viii, 5) and God's blessing remained with them. The fear of God should be accompanied by self-denial inseparable from a state, where you do not belong to yourself any more. Fear of God and self-denial should be your aid

1. In fulfilling all the duties of the married state. These are principally

*a.* Mutual love, equally far from indifference as from inordinate passion; the bonds of the souls are nobler than the bonds of the bodies.

*b.* Promotion of mutual edification and perfection. Devotion at home and in Church held in common, above all daily prayers and regular reception of the holy Sacraments.

*c.* Undeviating faithfulness. The spiritual bonds can not be dissolved any more, they are bound in heaven. It is this spiritual bondage that must keep you united in friendship.

2. In bearing adversities.

*a.* The daily burden and duties in housekeeping, education, etc. Christian married people know that mutual help is according to God's will and dispensation. "It is not good for man to be alone. Let us make him a *help* like unto himself." Gen. ii, 18.

*b.* Misfortunes and trials. Pious self-denial causes patience, acquiescence, contentment. The fear of God elicits sympathy, confidence, etc.

3. In avoiding all disturbances of matrimonial happiness.

*a.* The husband should not be extravagant, intemperate, or rough.

*b.* The wife be obedient, not quarrelsome, not vain.

*c.* Both should be on their guard against whisperers, and more against jealousy, often the cause of aversion. "Be not jealous over the wife of thy bosom; lest she shew in thy regard the malice of a wicked lesson." Ecc. ix, 1.

*Concl.* It is then with good reason that the Apostle calls matrimony a great sacrament in Christ and in the Church. Eph. v, 32. Therefore, only those who, before and in the married state, stick to the Church, will be partakers of the blessings of this Sacrament.

P. A. SHERER.

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## II.

## ON THE VICE OF DRUNKENNESS.

Whilst at the marriage of the Israelitic couple the wine failed, but Jesus and Mary and the Lord's disciples honored the guests with their presence; it often happens that at the occasion of feasts arranged by Christians, there is an abundance of wine and other intoxicating drinks, but Jesus and Mary cannot be invited, because Bacchus is the God who is worshiped. I avail myself of this occasion to warn you against the common vice of drunkenness, and say:

PART I.

Drunkenness is abominable on account of the monstrous nature of this vice. For the drunkard

I. DEGRADES HIS DIGNITY AS MAN.

He deprives himself of the use of reason, his principal prerogative over brutes, becomes an equal of the brutes, yea, inferior to brutes. This will be more apparent, if you consider

1. The degrees and effects of drunkenness; viz.: disturbing and clouding of the reasoning faculty, entire stupefaction and destitution of the senses.

2. The signs of drunkenness: not to remember the past, to be unable to distinguish between good and evil, trembling of the legs, lisping of the tongue, etc.

3. Contempt of drunkenness and drunkards by heathens. Drunkenness disabled the Romans for public offices; the

Spaniards would not admit him as a witness who had been once intoxicated; the Lacedomians, in order to excite hatred of this vice, made their children look at slaves in the state of intoxication, and throw dirt on them.

II. ACTS AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY

Forbidding severely all intemperance, and teaching nothing more seriously than self-denial and mortification. This vice is denounced

1. By Holy Scripture.

*a.* "Woe to you that are mighty to drink wine, and stout men at drunkenness." Is. v, 22.

*b.* "Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; and that day (of judgment) come upon you suddenly." Luke, xxi, 34.

*c.* How earnest a warning the parable of Dives (Luke, xvi, 19, sqq.), to those who excuse so easy their getting intoxicated on the assumption that they commit no other sin, except intoxication.

*d.* St. Paul counts the drunkards amongst the greatest sinners, and says plainly that they can not be heirs to the kingdom of heaven. Rom. xiii, 13; I Cor. vi, 9, 10; Gal. v, 19, sqq.

2. By the Doctors and Fathers of the Church.

St. Chrysostom: "Where is drunkenness, there is the devil; where is intemperance, there the devils lead the dance. Dives had such a table, wherefore he could not master one drop of water."

St. Bernard: "Many are caught by the devils with drunkenness, and drunkenness is nothing else than the voluntary and manifest devil."

PART II.

DRUNKENNESS IS ABOMINABLE

Because of its dreadful consequences in regard to

I. TEMPORAL WELFARE; FOR DRUNKENNESS

1. Undermines health, causes many diseases, and shortens life.

"Look not upon the wine when it is yellow, when the color

thereof shineth in the glass: it goeth in pleasantly: but in the end it will bite like a snake, and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk." Prov. xxiii, 31, 32, Cf.; Eccles. xxxvii, 34. St. Basil says: "Drunkenness is the ruin of strength, untimely old age, sudden death." Nature, badly abused, takes its own revenge. A weak trembling body, a sickly life, branded with the visible ugly marks of debauchery. Drunkenness fills the hospitals with sick, the asylums with lunatics, the graves with corpses of the young.

2. Impoverishes and disgraces.

"He that loveth good cheer shall be in want: he that loveth fat things shall not be rich." Prov. xxi, 17; Eccle. xix, 1. The drunkard

*a.* Squanders away his time, more precious than earthly goods, loses his wages, neglects his household, his children; loses all energy and activity, and thus

*b.* Becomes a burden to his relations; or, in consequence of his passion

*c.* He becomes a defrauder and thief. A lively portrait of the consequences of a dissipated life is given in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Luke, xv, 13-16.

3. Is often the cause of fights, riots, mutilation and murder. Cf. Eccles. xxxi, 38 sqq; Prov. xxiii, 29. Pitiful scene at the return of an intoxicated father cursing and abusing his wife and children, parents and sisters.

II. IN REGARD TO SPIRITUAL WELFARE.

For drunkenness

1. Inevitably causes neglect of Christian duties: Drunkards will not and cannot pray; they rather frequent saloons than churches, and destroy all aspirations for spiritual things and all religious feelings. This is particularly the case with him who is a slave of the demon Whisky.

2. Causes and nourishes the sin of the flesh. Because being deprived of the use of reason, he is shameless in words, looks and actions. Cf. Osee. iv, 11; Prov. xx, 1; Gen. xi, 21; xix, 33; Eph. v, 18.

3. Is the cause of great scandals, especially when drunkards are heads of families, or superiors. How great is the damage of scandal to children, etc.! How great the responsibility, how dreadful the punishment! I Tim, v, 8; Mtt. xviii, 6, 7.

This vice is almost past remedy. It is an old saying: Fornicarius raro, ebrius nunquam convertetur ad Dominum.

*Concl.* Be on your guard against this vice, and if you have contracted the bad habit of intemperance, take your refuge to constant prayer; mortify yourself, flee the occasion, and struggle incessantly against yourself. "Awake, ye that are drunk, and weep; and mourn all ye that take delight in drinking sweet wine!" Joel, i, 5.

HERENAEUS HAID.

## Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.

### I.

### THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS, A GLORIOUS NAME.

When God gave a name, it had its proper significance, as Adam, Abraham. The name of his Son is naturally much more significant, but was concealed for many centuries. Many traits of his life were made known to the prophets, but his name was not. Moses foresaw the power of his name. "Almighty is his name." David has only to say: "Holy and terrible is his name." Ps. cx, 9. Isaias calls him Emmanuel. (vii, 14.) "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace." ix, 6. He tells us that his name is high, but he himself does not know it. "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." lxii, 2. Should we not admire then this holy name, when after four thousand years the mouth of the Holy Angel announces it, saying: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus." A glorious name, indeed:

I. BEING THE NAME OF GOD AND THEREFORE INSCRUTABLE.

1. The Patriarchs never knew the name of God. They used the word Elohim, i. e. the great spirit. Jacob in a vision, desirous to learn the name of God, received the answer: "Why dost thou ask my name?" Gen. xxxii, 29. Samson's father received about the same answer: "Why asketh thou my name, which is wonderful?" Judges xiii, 18.

2. When God appeared to Moses in the fiery bush, the latter put the question: "If they shall say to me, what is his name? what shall I say to them?" Then God said to Moses: "I am who am." Exodus iii, 14, 15. That is I am by myself, I am being itself, eternal, self-existent, independent, infinite, without beginning, end or change; and the source of all other beings. The Israelites henceforth considered Jehova as the proper name of God.

3. Since the Jews were expressly forbidden to use the

name of God in vain, they had a sacred fear of the name of God. From that time they never dared utter the name Jehova, but even in reading the Bible replaced it by the word, Lord. Only once a year, the High Priest entering the sanctuary, solemnly pronounced the name Jehova.

II. BEING THE NAME OF THE SAVIOUR.

For, Saviour or Redeemer is the meaning of this sacred name. How glorious this name is, you may conclude from Phil. ii, 7-11. By this text the glory of his name is expounded.

1. Its origin.

God hath given him a name which is above every name. Men did not give this name, but God himself, who had it first pronounced by an angel's tongue.

2. Its cause.

"He debased himself, * * * he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Or, as the angel said to Joseph: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Mat. i, 21. Therefore, in this name the entire mystery of redemption, by which God and men received the greatest honor, is comprised.

3. Its eminence.

"Wherefore God hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name." And "Who sitteth on the right hand of the majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name above them." Heb. i, 3, 4. As Jesus is above all in heaven and on earth, so is also his name above every name.

4. Its adorableness.

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and in hell; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." Consequently not only all the angels and Saints, but even the devils, who believe and tremble, must bow to this name. And should not the inhabitants of the earth do all honor to the same sacred name?

III. LET US THEN GLORIFY THE SACRED NAME OF JESUS.

1. We follow the example of the Saints. In St. Paul's epistles we read the name of Jesus two hundred and nineteen times, and always mentioned with high esteem, and in supplication of divine blessing.

2. The name of Jesus should likewise be honored by all nations and every man. "Blessed be the name of the Lord, from henceforth, now and forever." Ps. cxii, 2. "From the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise. l. c. 3. Recommendation of the Christian greeting: "Praised be Jesus Christ, now and forever."

3. But in the right manner. For "no man can say, the Lord Jesus, but in the Holy Ghost." I Cor. xii, 13. Therefore as we should not pronounce this holy name but in the Holy Ghost, we should do so

*a.* With due reverence.

*b.* Show this reverence by a Christian life: He is the Redeemer, we the redeemed: He is Christ, we should be sincere Christians.

*Peroration:* Exhortation to Christian perfection worthy of Jesus and our redemption, "that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him." II Thess. i, 11, 12.

HOUDRY.

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## II.

## THE NAME OF JESUS FULL OF GRACE.

This is deduced:

1. From its types. As there were types of Jesus Christ, representing events of his temporal life, for instance, Isaac carrying the wood upon the summit of the mountain, so there were types of his name also. There are only a few who bore the name Jesus, or Saviour, which they were in a limited sense, and in regard to few.

*a.* Joseph of Egypt. Because he had saved Egypt from starvation, Pharao changed his name and called him * * the Saviour of the world. Gen. xli, 45. Jesus saves the world not

only from bodily starvation, but from the starvation of the soul, and promises that those who hunger and thirst after justice shall be filled. "You are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Cor. vi, 11.

*b.* Josue, who protected the people of Israel against their enemies whom he conquered, and led the children of Abraham into the Promised Land. Jesus delivered us out of the hands of our enemy, broke his power and opened heaven for us. "Nor is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." Acts iv, 12.

*c.* Jesus Sirach, a saviour of his people in the time of pestilence. In proportion as the soul is above the body, the diseases of the soul are more dreadful than those of the body. It is for this reason that the physician of our souls received the name of Jesus, "for he shall save his people from their sins." Mat. i, 21.

*Simile.* The name of the bridegroom in the Canticles is called an effused oil, by which the effects of this sacred name are well expressed.

By oil light is given. By the name of Jesus the darkness of paganism was expelled, and the light of Christian doctrine spread.

The oil is nourishing. In the name of Jesus all treasures of salvation and virtue are concealed.

By the oil anointments are made. All graces, especially the Holy Sacraments, receive their efficacy from the name of Jesus.

*An effused oil.* The treasures of this holy name lie open before you, you only need to take them.

2. From all the effects which are ascribed to this name. "It is a name that contains all good things." St. Chrysos. By this name we obtain

*a.* Forgiveness of sins. Say with David: "For thy name's sake, O Lord, thou will pardon my sin: for it is great." Ps. xxiv, 11. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just; and he is the propitiation for our sins." I John ii, 1, 2.

*b.* Conversion, the most urgent necessity for every sinner.

"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Saul had scarcely heard this name uttered, when the persecutor became an Apostle, and undertook "to carry his name to the gentiles."

*c.* Virtue and merits. "All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Col. iii, 17. What is done in the name of Jesus, in his grace, for his sake, it is very pleasing to God. Let us arise in the name of Jesus, let us work in his name, etc.

*d.* Consolation in afflictions. No sooner had Saul resolved to become a disciple of Jesus, than he showed him, how great things he must suffer for the sake of his name. Acts ix, 16. But great was the eagerness and joy of the Apostles in suffering for Jesus Christ! After being scourged, "they indeed went from the presence of the Council rejoicing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus." Acts v, 41.

*e.* Help in all tribulations of both body and soul. Jesus promised to hear those who would ask in his name. Peter said to the man who was lame from his mother's womb: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." Acts iii, 6. And the Holy Church concludes all her prayers: "Through our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

*f.* Protection against all dangers and snares of evil spirits. "In my name they shall cast out devils," etc. Mark xvi, 17, 18. Nothing is more formidable to the fallen angels than to pronounce with confidence the name, in which "every knee must bow of those who are in hell." Phil. ii, 10. Especially in time of temptation we should invoke this divine name.

*g.* Everlasting happiness. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Rom. x, 13. Of course it is understood that we should seek in Jesus the source of all happiness, by attaching ourselves to him in faith, hope and charity. Confiding in this powerful name, the Church requires it to be pronounced in order to obtain the plenary indulgence at the hour of death, and wants it repeated to the Christians, when they breathe their last.

*Peroration:* How many motives of praising, esteeming and trusting the name of Jesus! "For this name justifies the sinner, delights the just, supports those that are tempted, augments the grace for the just, and beatifies all that call upon it." St. Thom. Aqu. "All that love thy name, shall glory in thee." Ps. v, 12.

HOUDRY.

## Third Sunday after the Epiphany.

### I.

### THE MOST FATAL LEPROSY.

The poor lepers cried out for help. How great their misery! Description of their disease. Alas! How many lepers are there, who, though infected with a more frightful sort of leprosy, are not aware of the dreadful disease, they are contaminated with! Let them consider with me the nature of their disease, and the remedies against it.

PART I.

NATURE OF THIS DISEASE.

I. Sin is a real leprosy. Like the leprosy of the body it

1. Defiles the image of God in man, deprives him of his beauty, and makes the soul the object of God's dislike.

2. As the leprosy of the body separates man from human society, so sin separates the Christian from God, the holy angels and the Saints, aye, to a certain degree, from the communion of the faithful—the Church, to which the sinner belongs as to number, not as to merit.

3. As leprosy on the body, so sin produces in the soul seven lamentable effects: tumor—pride; disfiguring of the face—envy; hoarseness of voice—wrath; inability to work—laziness; thirst—covetousness; stinking breath—lewdness; consumption of the whole body—gluttony and greediness.

4. Leprosy is contagious, so is sin. One seduces the other.

II. Its effects are of more dreadful consequence, for

1. It poisons and kills the soul, that is

*a.* The image and likeness of the Triune God. "A spirit like God, immortal, destined to partake of eternal happiness, endowed with understanding, full will and memory—three powers and one essence. (St. Bernard.) "In man we see a reflection of the Blessed Trinity: like the Father he has the (spiritual) sub-

stance; like the Son, he has understanding; like the Holy Ghost, he has love." Bossuet.

*b.* The best work of God—a breath out of the mouth of God;

*c.* The most ingenious work of visible creation. The Blessed Trinity was, so to speak, in consultation, saying: "Let us make men." Gen. i, 26.

*d.* The dearest work of the greatest master, Almighty God. For an infinite price he has redeemed the soul. "If you will not believe the Creator, believe at least the Redeemer." St. Eusеb. "What doth it profit?" Matt. xvi, 26.

2. This leprosy is seldom discerned. "The sinner has eyes, but sees not." His passions pile up clouds of mist before his spiritual eyes and surround his understanding with darkness." St. Theophilus. He is like a blind man, who does not see the light of the sun, like a dirty looking-glass.

3. The most lasting leprosy. Its sequels reach into eternity. "The sinner loses the eternal bliss for which he is created, and finds the misery for which he is not created." St. Aug.

*a.* Heaven will be shut against him for ever, as nothing defiled can enter there.

*b.* He will be deprived of the vision of God and the society of angels and Saints for ever. The Lord will say: "Depart from me. "Therefore Lazarus said to Dives: "Between us and you there is fixed a great chaos." Luke xvi, 26.

*c.* Hell will be his abode, and inexpressible torments will be his part.

*d.* He will suffer without consolation and relief and without end. "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched." Is. lxvi, 24. "The smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever." Apoc. xiv, 11. "In hell there is an ever-dying life and an ever-living death." St. Bonav.

PART II.

CURE OF THIS DISEASE.

It comes only from God:

I. In the name of Jesus.

"Surely he hath born our infirmities, and carried our sorrows. And we have thought him as it were a leper." Is. liii, 4. Like a leper

1. He was deformed. "There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness * * a man of sorrow * * and his look was as it were hidden and despised." Is. liii, 2, 3.

2. He was disdained. He says: "I am a worm, and no man: the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people." Psl. xxi, 7.

3. He was cast out of the city, and driven toward Golgatha.

4. He suffered from a burning thirst. He cried out: "I thirst." St. John xix, 28.

5. He says: "My jaws are become hoarse." Ps. lxviii, 4. But "by his bruises we are healed." Isa. liii, 5.

II. BY THE CHURCH AS THE ESTABLISHED INSTITUTION FOR OUR SALVATION.

"Go, show thyself to the priest." To the priests of the Jews it was only given to judge, if the leprosy of the body was healed; our priests have received the power not only to judge, but to cleanse of the leprosy of the soul." St. Chrys.

1. This grace is conferred in the Sacrament of Baptism, whereby Original Sin and all sins committed after baptism are forgiven. Jesus was baptized in the river of Jordan, in order to bury the Old Adam in the depth of water, and to sanctify the water, so as to give it the power to justify those who are to be baptized.

2. In the Sacrament of Penance, by which all sins committed after baptism are forgiven. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just, and he is the propitiation for our sins and * * for those of the whole world." I John ii, 1, 2.

*Peroration:* "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean" cried the leper with full confidence. And Jesus said: "I will, be thou made clean." What Jesus willed then, he wills still,—make us clean. But will we earnestly what that leper willed?

P. A. SCHERER.

## II.

## REVERENCE OWED TO THE PRIEST.

"Go show thyself to the priest." These words of the Lord manifest the reverence he required for the priests. And yet the tribe of Aaron was but an imperfect figure of the Christian priesthood in regard to its position, duties and efficacy. For exceedingly high is the position of the Catholic priests:

### I. IN THEIR RELATION TO GOD.

1. God himself honors them

*a.* By communicating to them an indelible character in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. God, who being jealous of his own honor, said: "I the Lord, this is my name: I will not give my glory to another" (Isai. xlii, 8), and "There is none holy as the Lord is," I Kings ii, 2, yet declares: "They offer the bread of their God, and therefore they shall be holy," Lev, xxi, 6, and "Thou shalt not speak ill of the Gods," Ex. xxii, 28, which text applies to the priests.

*b.* By putting them on a level with the holy angels.

However great the disparity of nature may be, yet it is written: "They shall seek the law at the priest's mouth: because he is the Angel of the Lord of hosts. Mal. ii, 6. "Do not think him one to be contemned * * * my name is in him." Ex. xxiii, 21.

2. So much more in the New Testament.

*a.* The priests are the intimate friends of Jesus. "I have called you friends; because all things whatsoever I have heard from my Father, I have made known to you." John xv, 15.

*b.* They are vicars of Christ, representing him. "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." John xx, 21.

"Who heareth you, heareth me," etc. They enjoy the same destiny, mission and power; they release, bind, sanctify like Christ himself. How exalted a position!

*c.* They have power over the Body and Blood of Christ. Moses' word was powerful; Josua's desire efficacious; great was Mary's dignity as mother of God. But the priest calls the Lord

from his heavenly throne, performs the miracle of consecration, handles him in the Blessed Eucharist. "O truly venerable greatness of the priest to whom God trusts himself, and his greatest treasure—the souls." St. Leo.

The Priest should be honored in consideration of

II. THEIR RELATION TO US.

1. They are the greatest benefactors of mankind:

*a.* Being the true fathers of men as mediators of the life of our soul through the Sacrament of Baptism and the doctrine of Christ. "In Jesus Christ I have begotten you through the gospel." I Cor. iv, 15. They were the bearers and guardians of the sacred truth for eighteen centuries of tribulations and struggles. Does not all this give a claim for reverence?

*b.* Their visible guardian angels—from the cradle to the grave; consoling, exhorting, warning, helping, blessing, wherever it is needed. The most faithful and self-sacrificing friends. (You may explain this by going through the single Sacraments.)

*c.* The dispensers of grace—of eternal life, in the Sacrament of Penance. Who was not once a leper and was healed? Dead and was not raised from death? By whose mediation? You are indebted to the priest for the peace of your life, and the joyful hope of heaven. How much trouble, prayers and anguish did the regeneration of the sinner often cause him!

*d.* The fortifiers of the souls—by preparing and distributing the Eucharistic Bread. How great are the effects of this celebrated food upon your souls, and therefore how great should be the reverence of man for the priest!

2. We must show our reverence even for those priests whose conduct is a disgrace to their holy vocation. How great a noise is raised, when a priest falls! It gives occasion of despising the whole priesthood. That is wrong, for

*a.* The unworthy priests retain the powers once conferred upon them. If Judas or John baptize, it is the same Sacrament; and so about the other Sacraments.

*b.* God will be honored—on account of their dignity.

"Touch not my anointed: and do no evil to my prophets."

I Par. xvi, 22. And were all the priests, esteemed by Christ and his Apostles, worthy priests? And though: "Whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do." Mtt. xxiii, 3. "Who despiseth you," etc.

*c.* It is for the punishment of the sins of the people that bad priests enter the sanctuary. V. III Kings xxi, 25; xxii, 23. Therefore we should pray fervently, especially in Ember Week, for worthy laborers in the Lord's vineyard.

*Peroration:* You are obliged, then, under any circumstances, to obey the priest, unless he commands you to violate the law of God. "Obey your prelates and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account for your souls, that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this is not expedient for you. Pray for us." Heb. xiii, 17, 18.

GUIDI.

## Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany.

### I.

### THE TEMPEST AGAINST ST. PETER'S BARK.

The miracle on the sea of Genesareth was great, greater than the one of which the first was the figure. "The bark was the figure of the true church." St. Aug. "The sea is the world being inimical to the church, and agitated by both the demons, and passions of men. Jesus is asleep, that is to say, he suffers the tempest to arise, for a wise purpose. Like the Apostles the faithful incessantly cry out for help. The Lord commands the tempest, and there comes a great calm; victorious, cleansed, unhurt, sails the bark of St. Peter, under the flag of the Cross, on the ocean of the centuries. Nothing guarantees more the divine origin of the Catholic Church than her glorious existence during and after such tempests. Being hardly ever without disturbance, the church has seen four great tempests: the tempest of judaism arising against the church at her birth, the tempest of paganism during the ten persecutions, the tempest of heresies, and the tempest of modern godless science and godless politics.

1. The Tempest of judaism arising against the Church at her birth.

1. The sea is turbulent.

*a.* Christ on the Cross—the second Ark—crosses the ocean of affliction. "Great as the sea is thy destruction." Jerem. Lam. ii, 13. His adherents afflicted with him.

*b.* Christ sleeps—the sleep of death.

*c.* The bark is covered with waves. The salt water of jewish pride and blasphemy, the despondency of her own members innundate the Church. The Apostles abscond—the Church seems ruined. Wild enthusiasm of hell and the synagogue.

2. Yet the bark is triumphing.

*a.* The Apostles awake the Lord, by ardent longing and praying for his resurrection.

*b.* Jesus awakes—from death; his appearance commands

the waves of sneers, infidelity and despondency; the calm of faith reigns in the hearts of the disciples.

*c.* The bark, Peter at the helm, enriched with treasures gathered during the tempest, (Acts ii, 41,) knit with blood, sails hurriedly into the high sea, and lands at Rome to stand the test against the

II. Tempest of paganism during the ten persecutions.

1. A sweeping tempest. No sooner was the ship in sight, with Cross, revelation and commandments, than

*a.* The whirlpool commenced raging. Hell disturbed in its old dominion, sends forth demons by the millions to war against Christ and his saving bark. They went into the idols and heathens themselves, speaking lies and causing thirst of blood.

*b.* The storm rages in the air. Pride blasphemes the Crucified; the science of the heathens ridicules the Christian faith; the Cæsars were right in taking this celestial bark for a fire ship, destined to destroy their dominion as based upon polytheism; they issue their edicts to massacre all the passengers.

*c.* The ocean rages on all sides. The waves of passions fearing the fetters of Christendom, rear like mountains. Corruption and avarice, and demoniac ferocity, like ferocious dragons, surround it.

*d.* The ship is in great danger. The helmsman is slain, one after the other (the many martyr popes); the sailors, bishops and priests are slaughtered: the passengers, the faithful are killed. The axe is laid to the mainmast of the Cross; by endless persecution the anchors of hope are cut off. A monument is erected in honor of Diocletian, as the "destroyer of Christ." Is this sacred bark, after a tempest of three centuries, destroyed indeed? Far from it! "Why have the gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? * * * He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them: and the Lord shall deride them." Psal. ii, 1-4.

2. The bark is triumphant.

*a.* The Lord awakes! Aroused by the prayers of the Saints, and the crying blood of the martyrs.

*b.* And threatens the sea, speaking to the hearts of the kings and powerful, punishing the nations and making the world silent to embrace the faith.

*c.* There came a great calm. Hatred and passions are subdued, the oracles become silent. Over the sea resounds the hymns of the nations united in faith and charity.

*d.* And the bark? Without damage, laden with the prey of nations, ornamented with rubies of the sacred blood of martyrs, the sails swelling with the desire of nations, honored by emperors, it shines in the glory of victory. And the gigantic vessel of the State is dashed to pieces. Over Nero's palace you behold the dome of St. Peter's tomb; the imperial city, the pandæmonium of the world, bows to the fisherman.

After such a contest it is with confidence that we witness the

III. Tempest of heresies.

Full of wrath because of having no success from outside, the fiend entered the vessel itself.

1. A more dangerous tempest arises:

*a.* A mutiny among the crew. A dreadful spectacle! Christians—baptized in fire and the Holy Ghost, men of science, such as are put on a stand, bishops rebel against Jesus Christ and his Vicar.

*b.* The attempt to deprive the vessel of its vital conditions: now they attacked Christ's Godhead, now his unity, now his two natures. Some deny the expiating effect of his death, others the necessity of grace, others make its effect dependent on the administrator's dignity. In the sixteenth century the war is waged anew against liberty, priesthood, the Sacraments. They try to undermine the rock of St. Peter, to throw the helmsman over board; they unfetter the passions.

*c.* The unnatural sons who rebel against their mother, call upon the kings and mighty of this world, proclaiming them the owners of Church property and the rulers of immortal souls.

The watchmen careless or perfidious. The mass of people rude. Heresy triumphed; by human judgment the Vessel was doomed to sink.

2. Nevertheless St. Peter's Bark stood the test.

*a.* Christ awoke. His spirit is poured out over the governors of the church; they meet in councils and define and make known the true doctrine of Jesus Christ, and thus the sun of Catholic truth shines brighter over the world than ever, and the clouds of error and heresy disappear.

*b.* St. Peter's Bark gains the victory. The tempest took away those who, as regards faith, were rotten. The sound members are more united to the church and her head. The contagious disease disappears. Not one particle of truth is lost; the diamond of truth shines brighter in a solid frame.

New nations coming from the East and West under the guidance of Saints as St. Xavier and Franciscus Solaans are anxious to enter the miraculous Vessel of Salvation.

*c.* The assailants sink into the depth of the sea. They fell into oblivion like the ancient heretics; into a languishing state, when the governments would not protect them; into boundless shivers and splinters; into general contempt, since so many of their adherents are infidels, and the consequences of their doctrine are shown by the immorality of life.

Hail, hail thou, O divine Vessel governed by God himself. Anchor triumphantly—but no! another tempest is rising.

IV. THE TEMPEST OF MODERN GODLESS SCIENCE.

1. The sailing vessel is in the greatest danger, as the tempest is

*a.* Threatening to destroy the Church—by its authors.

The most prominent intellects of the eighteenth century conspired to destroy "l'Infame." All literature was destined for this design. In the cabinet of the prince, on the desk of the man of letters, in the house of the citizen the altar of the idol was erected. Scepticism, derision of the most sacred things were the effective, devilish means; society was corroded, first in France, then in other countries.

*b.* The tempest was dreadful in its consequences—the horrors of revolution, the daughter of infidelity. The sanctuaries robbed, convents emptied of their inhabitants, altars destroyed, bishops exiled, priests slain, God dethroned. The supreme head of the Church plundered, abused, imprisoned, exposed to the malice of the tyrant. The Vessel, therefore, being deprived of its helmsman, while vice and frivolity fly through all Europe on the eagles of the legions. Woe to St. Peter's Bark! Satan is victorious.

2. And yet the Vessel was saved.

*a.* Jesus awoke and rebuked the princes and nations by the affliction of wars, rebuked them in Russia's snowy fields.

*b.* And a great calm came. The Sacred League bowed before God, so did the nations; consolation and salvation was sought for in the church. Whilst thrones were overturned, constitutions changed, and the great voracious eagle sat in sadness,—what event did happen?

*c.* The Vessel conquers the tempest. Poorer, but stronger. Free, venerated by hundreds of millions, more intimately united with the bishops, the helmsman governs. The nations look to Rome, and are obedient to her. He sends messengers of the Gospel into the remotest regions, erects new dioceses. Darkness trembles before him.

*Concl.:* O wonder of wonders! Where is the explanation? "Thou art Peter, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." Mtt. xvi, 18. The Catholic Church is the one bride of Jesus Christ, therefore inviolable forever. What we have meditated on for confirmation of our faith, "by the Lord hath this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes." Mark xii, 11. Hail! Christ is watching!

VENTURA.

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## II.

## DEATH IN SIN.

The disciples of Jesus were in great danger of being shipwrecked, and who knows what might have happened, unless the

Lord had commanded the tempest? We all are to sail through a narrow channel, where we shall struggle against a great tempest; I mean, death, the narrow channel, we have to sail through out of the sea of this life into the ocean of eternity. Hail to us, if the Lord should command the tempest. But woe to all those who, by their sins, withdraw from him farther and farther: they have to fear the most dreadful shipwreck, death in the state of sin.

I. THE SINNER CAN DIE IN HIS SINS.

1. Death in sin is horrible. The wretched sinner loses soul, heaven, the vision of God, and is cast out into exterior darkness, to suffer there for ever. What a calamity!

2. This calamity can befall the sinner. Faith, reason and experience convince you of it. Should not this mere possibility make him tremble?

3. This calamity may *soon* befall him. How short is the longest life! And moreover, who ensures him a long life? Do not many people die suddenly? From apoplexy, from hemorrhage, or by an accident?

II. THE SINNER DESERVES TO DIE IN HIS SINS.

1. Sin is the blackest ingratitude towards God. How manifold are the benefits of God! He created man to be his own image and likeness, redeemed him on the Cross, heaps benefits upon him during his lifetime. If man, notwithstanding all this, resists his holy will, and instead of loving, offends and insults him: is he then not culpable in losing his life, and being cast into hell by an Enraged Judge?

2. Sin is the most treacherous revolt against God. The sinner wants to become independent of God, and dethrone the Lord of heaven and earth. Sin would destroy the Lord himself, if it were possible. In consequence of this perjury all creatures cry for revenge:

*a.* The inanimate creatures. "He will arm the creature for the revenge of his enemies." Wisd. v, 18. The earth is ready to devour the sinner, the water to bury him in the grave of his floods, the fire to burn him.

*b.* The fallen angels and the damned in hell. Take revenge, they cry out, O eternal God, take revenge. Thou hast punished us according to our desert; punish this sinner also.

*c.* The sinner himself. He knows that he deserves to die in his sins, and yet he commits them, and by so doing signs the sentence of this dreadful punishment. "Remember well, that you have condemned yourselves whenever you sinned." St. Chrysost.

III. THE SINNER USUALLY DIES IN HIS SINS, INDEED.

This is taught

1. By Holy Scripture.

*a.* By words: "Be not overmuch wicked, and be not foolish, lest thou die before thy time." Eccle. vii, 18. "Before his days be full, he shall perish: and his hands shall wither away." Job xv, 32. "How are they brought to desolation! they have suddenly ceased to be: they have perished by reason of their iniquity." Ps. lxii, 19.

*b.* By examples. Pharao, Saul, Absalom, Jeroboam, ONAN, Antiochus, etc.

2. By reason. Sin is of infinite weight. As the physical weight presses the body towards the earth, so the moral weight of sin presses the soul towards hell. It is true, God often holds the sinner for a long time; but when he sees his heart hardened, he leaves him to his own iniquity,

*a.* Which often quickly throws him into eternal damnation. "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell." Job xxi, 13.

*b.* Though the sinner should not die suddenly, he usually dies in his sins, anyhow. The hope of conversion is delusive. For you do not know that you will have the necessary grace, nor that you will comply with the necessary conditions of obtaining remission of sins. "To conversion remission was promised, to delay the to-morrow was not promised." St. Aug.

*Peroration:* Poor sinner, follow then without delay the path of penance to escape the most disastrous ship-wreck—death in sin. "Fear at least death, unless you fear sin." St. Aug.

BORDONI.

## Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany.

### I

### ON GIVING SCANDAL AND TAKING SCANDAL.

By the cockle in the Gospel, sin, especially public sin, is understood. For cockle and sin are of the same nature and effects. Sin is evil in itself, and is the source of countless sins of your fellow-creatures, by way of scandal, and therefore the woe announced to the world because of scandals (Mt. xiii, 7) is deserved. No less is it forbidden to be scandalized without foundation, than the Lord forbade the servants to gather up the cockle that had appeared indeed, thus insinuating that God has reserved for himself the judgment, and that the effects of passionate zeal are disastrous. Both scandal and taking scandal is to be avoided. I wish to impress this truth upon your mind. Listen to me.

PART I.

It is a grievous crime to give scandal.

1. It is execrable in itself. For whoever gives scandal, he is

*a.* A murderer of souls.

He robs, ensnares and suffocates the souls. What a black deed! "The enemy of the soul is more to be feared than the enemy of the body." St. Choysost. The former approaches secretly, his dagger concealed under flowers; in cold blood, with determination, he kills the noblest part of man, separates it from God, who is the only true life. It is horrible to throw into the everlasting whirlpool the child of the same mother, being destined for heaven. What a responsibility! "I will require his blood at thy hand." Ezech. iii, 18. (Here, the orator vividly describes the awe and woe of a soul condemned in consequence of scandal given.)

*b.* An Antichrist.

"Many seducers are gone out into the world. * * * This is a seducer and an Antichrist." II John, 7. He destroys the work of Christ; he diametrically counteracts his efforts. What did, what does Jesus? What he who scandalizes? An

apostle and teacher of vice in seducing by deed, word or writing, he turns the innocent virgin into a demoralized woman, the faithful into an infidel, etc.

*c.* A Satan in human shape.

Like Satan he plots the eternal perdition of souls, is a seducer employed in hell's service. Where are not such Satans seen? Seek them in the office of the lawyer, in the shop of the artist, in the abode of the faithless scholar, in the places of amusement, etc. And like Satan most of such men work from diabolical malignity and malignant joy. In spite of God! An abyss of perversity.

2. It is so much more lamentable, as this vice blinds the perpetrator. So much more fearful, because not feared. Self-love covers it, diabolical sophistry justifies it.

*a.* Many do not acknowledge their scandalizing.

The woman introducing abominable fashions; the book-seller selling shameless phamphlets, periodicals, etc., the superior not prohibiting unchaste conversation—do they give scandal? O no, they say. They have no bad intention, etc. What blindness!

*b.* Few reflect on its monstrosity.

An enormous sin as the evil deed may be, it is a trifle in comparison to the scandal coming from it. Its grievousness is measured by the nature of the deed, the condition of the perpetrator, the number of those who are scandalized, and ignorant of your intention. All the consequences fall back on him who gave the scandal, O heaven, what a chain, what a weight! Examples:—

3. It is exceeding contagious and incurable.

*a.* It produces its effects as quick as lightning.

The heresies of the different centuries, how quickly spread! A scandalous doctrine overflowing Christian countries in a short space of time. The demon carried the religion of infidelity through every country with incredible speed. The immorality of revolutions poisoned the greater portion of Europe for a great length of time. The same is observed in families and smaller social circles, so much more, when the scandal originated from pious and respected men.

*b.* It cannot be undone.

Can you stop the avalanche or the rolling rock? Can you take the poison out of your victim's heart? The good example does not blot out the evil. Experience. How dreadful! Your deed will perhaps bear evil consequences for centuries. When you will have been in hell a long time, new comers will curse you, their destroying angel. Think of it and beware of giving scandal.

PART II.

Sometimes it is no less grievous crime to be scandalized.

Many boast of their proneness of taking scandal, but it is no sign of true virtue.

1. This proneness often originates from a poisonous root.

What is often the cause of your passionate excitement over the stumbling of your neighbors? Is it pure zeal? Is it virtuous indignation? Far from it.

*a.* The cause of your excitement is often envy and jealousy. Example of the Pharisees. Were they not scandalized even by Christ who knew no sin? Why did they keep silent about others? He stood far above them, as for dignity and virtue, hence their hatred and criticism. Many scandals of our age originate from the same motives. Examples:

*b.* Sometimes mere caprice is the cause.

There are sullen characters that see everything in a black color, and declaim with great warmth against everything. Such a man was Tertullian. He has his equals who dream of a morose God and a gloomy religion, and reprehend everything not in conformity with their preconceived idea, misconstrue the most innocent occurrences, etc.

*c.* Sometimes secret pride is the cause.

An humble Christian despises nobody but himself, he is convinced that he may fall deeper yet than the greatest sinner. The reverse takes place with the self-complacent Christian. He is scandalized not less at virtue than at vice. It is his own sanctity that he desires to be announced by the trumpet.

2. As damnable in its origin, so the proneness of taking

scandal is exceptionable an account of its unhappy consequences. These are:

*a.* Contempt of the sanctuary.

If a priest should fall, a certain class of 'pious' people, though angels were found wanting, will fall upon his anointed, and give him and his sacred functions over to contempt and derision. In a similar way, if a pious man should stumble, virtue itself is put in question.

*b.* Injustice by generalization.

One draws conclusions from the trespass of one person upon the whole family, community, state of life. One false step is spoken of as of a bad habit. Where is there truth, charity and justice? How many dissensions come from this way of acting! Therefore hated and punished by God.

*Peroration:* Now, there are scandals enough on the summits and in the valleys of society. And the reapers and the fire will come upon the cockle; it is not our place to condemn, but to shut our eyes, to guard our altar and to weep secret tears to God, that by converting sinners, he may take away all scandal.

PERRIN.

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## II

## DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF TEMPORAL GOODS.

The Gospel of to-day exhorts me to defend Divine Providence against a common accusation. As the servants complained to the master of the growth of the cockle in the wheat field, so many Christians now-a-days complain of the thrift and prosperity of the wicked. I could answer these malcontents with the words of St. Paul: "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it: Why hast thou made me thus? Or hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Rom. ix, 20, 21. Or I could repeat to them the words of the husbandman: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good?

Take what is thine, and go thy way." Matt. xx, 15, 13. But since it is a very common complaint that the wicked receive the fat of the earth, whilst the just go out empty, I intend, for the defense of Divine Providence, to give a complete answer.

PART I.

It is a general observance that temporal blessings as well as sufferings are distributed without regard to the morals of man.

1. There are good and bad men upon whom the sun of temporal blessings shines from early dawning until night. Does not our Saviour himself say of his Heavenly Father that "he maketh his sun to rise upon the good, and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust?" Mt. v, 45.

2. From examples of Sacred History we are led to the same opinion.

*a.* We know from Holy Scripture that God often heaped his temporal blessings upon his friends, as Abel, Abraham, Jacob, Laban, Joseph of Egypt, David, Solomon, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus and the Centurion of the Gospel, etc.

*b.* On the other hand did not Cain hear the curse out of the mouth of God: When thou shalt till it, it shall not yield to thee its fruit? Was he not a fugative and a wanderer upon the earth? Were Joseph's brothers not afflicted with a famine, and were they not blushing before Joseph's face? And Achab! and Antiochus eaten up by worms!

*c.* We know of wicked men like Dives who led an apparently happy life to their death, whilst others like Lazarus, lived a wretched life to their end.

3. By experience. Conflagration and inundations destroy the property of both the good and the bad, the burning rays of the sun lay waste the fields of the children of God as well as of the slaves of the devil. Revolutions and wars disturb the social order for all.

From this we draw the conclusion, that the moral condition of man is not exclusively or even principally the measure of God's blessings or afflictions.

4. Reason itself teaches us, that it cannot be otherwise, if human liberty and the moral order founded on this liberty is not to be destroyed. Who would dare to trespass any of God's commandments, if in every instance the punishment would succeed the transgression? Men would be like a drove of cattle, driven by hunger or the lash towards heaven or hell. And blasphemous tongues would with reason say about the virtuous man what Satan said about Job: "Doth Job fear God in vain? Hast thou not made a fence for him, and his house, and all his substance round about, blessed the works of his hands, and his possession hath increased on the earth? But stretch forth thy hand a little, and touch all that he hath, and see if he blessed (cursed) thee not to thy face." Job i, 9–11.

5. All men are contaminated with sin. "Who can understand sins! from my secret ones cleanse me, O Lord: and from those of others spare thy servant." Ps. xviii, 13. We are a sinful race. We sigh under the weight of Original Sin and its consequences, and every hour of our life is marked with new imperfections. Verily, it is not the Saints who complained of unequal distribution of temporal goods, but those who are far from being Saints. Therefore, if we witness the unequal distribution of earthly blessings, let us bow before the inscrutable wisdom of God, and say with the Psalmist: "Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right." Ps. cxviii, 137.

PART II.

The salvation of our soul is God's principal object and disign in distributing earthly goods.

The salvation of our souls is the grand theme of God's economy, to obtain which he sends to the one his temporal blessings, to the other tribulations and sufferings.

1. "The Lord knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust." Ps. cii, 13, 14. He knoweth the frailty of man, and desires to save even those who are sunk into the depth of vice. Is it of any avail to approach them by sweet warnings and consolations, "in the whispering of the wind?" They would not listen to him. Or should he persecute them with suffering

and misfortune, by thunder and lightning? Their heart would either become obdurate or deprived of liberty. Therefore he seeks to gain their affection by earthly presents. The merciful Samaritan descended from his horse and bowed to him that lay wounded on the wayside. He once complied with the desire of his chosen people, to draw their affection towards him. He gave them a land flowing with milk and honey, destroyed their enemies and anointed powerful kings to govern them. In regard to individuals he acts likewise, after the manner of the gardener of the Gospel, who dug around the sterile fruit-tree and laid dung around it.

2. God calls upon the just also, though in a different language. The greater measure of misery is to keep them on the path of justice and prove the value of their virtue.

*a.* Because temporal happiness often averts man's heart from God and his holy will, the good Father lays thorns on the path of his Elect. Thousands and millions gained the heavenly crown on this royal way of the cross.

*b.* Because he wants to prove their virtue. The tribulation is the proving fire. Besides there are many virtues, as patience, confidence in God, resignation, meekness, humility, which can hardly be exercised to perfection unless by tribulations. "Because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee." Tobias xii, 13. Ye Christians, said once the gentiles, you seem to be forsaken by God. You are driven from land to land; exile, persecution, death is your lot. Your God is either powerless or merciless. Minutius Felix answered: "The Lord casts his just ones like gold into the furnace of sufferings and afflictions, in order to prove the value of their virtues.

To silence all complaints about the manner of distributing earthly goods, let us consider the following truth:

PART III.

The unequal distribution of earthly fortune is a work of the justice of God, who gives both the bad and the good their rewards on earth.

1. As to the wicked temporal blessing is the payment in advance for the few good works they have done on earth. God is just, even toward his enemies. "The Lord is just, and hath loved justice: his countenance hath beheld righteousness." Ps. x, 8. "Thy justice is as the mountains of God." Ps. xxxv, 7. God has promised that the least good work shall receive its reward. "Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, Amen, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward." Matt. x, 42. Now the wicked have done some good works which having not been performed in the state of grace, cannot receive their reward in the world to come. Therefore God rewards them in this world. "Son, said Abraham to Dives, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life time, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." Lk. xvi, 25. "Woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation." Lk. vi, 24. It is in the same sense that St. Augustin wrote, that the Roman people had gained the dominion of the world as a reward for their natural virtues, as temperance, valor, justice, etc. (De Civ. Dei. L. V. C. 15.) Would you call that a fortune? Call a fortune what is rather a mark of eternal damnation? "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell." Job xxi, 23.

2. As to the Elect, their shortcomings in temporal things are the work of divine justice also, for the purpose of purifying them from imperfection and remains of sin, and increasing their eternal reward. "For all have sinned, and need the glory of God." Rom. iii, 23. Our eternal Judge, being at the same time our loving Father, made the pilgrimage of his faithful children part of their Purgatory. Therefore: "For which cause we faint not: but though our outward man is corrupt, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our present tribulation, which is momentary and light, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen, are temporal: but the things which are not seen, are eternal." II Cor. iv, 16–18.

Moreover, God will multiply their reward. "If sons, heirs also: heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: yet so, if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him. For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us." Rom. viii, 17, 18. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Going, they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming, they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves." Ps. cxxv. 5, 6.

*Peroration:* "Let both grow until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn; but gather the wheat into my bârn." Wait till the harvest of God, and the harvest of the devil will come, and judge not about the unequal distribution of earthly goods before the time of this great harvest. JOSEPH EHRLER.

## Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany.

### I.

### NECESSITY AND EFFICACY OF GRACE.

The kingdom of heaven, as represented to us by parables, is the kingdom of Grace, in contradistinction to the kingdom of the Law. Like the mustard-seed and leaven, grace is scarcely observed, and though of so great importance as regards the body of the Church, it is not less so as regards her single members, if the seed finds good soil. Let us consider the Catholic doctrine of the necessity and efficacy of Divine Grace.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN REGARD TO GRACE.

1. Grace is *necessary*. Without grace we cannot do anything towards our salvation. It is the air, the most necessary condition of our soul's life. Such was the constant doctrine of the Church against heresies, from Pelagius to Luther. Vide Trid. Sess. VI. de Justif.

*a.* Necessary for justification. Man can sin, but he cannot remove sin. However great deeds he may perform, he will never reach God without being lifted up by his hand. "All have sinned * * * being justified *gratis* by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii, 24, Vide Conc. Trid. l. c. can. i. Wherefore without grace no reconciliation, no friendship with God, no divine filiation, no inheritance of heaven.

*b.* Necessary in order to lead a Christian life. The hereditary concupiscence attracts sin, which you cannot escape except by God's help. "By thee I shall be delivered from temptation, and through my God I shall go over a wall." Ps. xvii, 30. "It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will." Philip ii, 13. Vide Conc. Trid. l. c. can. 2 and 3. The grace was efficacious with the just heathens, too. Or "is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles?" Rom. iii, 29.

*c.* Necessary in order to perform meritorious acts for heaven. As the tree, so the fruit; as man, so his works; viz., natural,

and thereby to win a supernatural merit. Let us examine it.

1. Divine grace is absolutely necessary. It is the ointment with which they must be anointed from a heart saturated by grace, in order to be filled with the gift of Christ's merits. "Truly, in him—in God's grace—we live, and we move, and we are." Acts xvii. 28. Acknowledge how little you can give honor to God. Without God you can do nothing, with him you can do all things.

2. Divine grace is efficacious and proves its efficacy

*a.* By overcoming every difficulty—of an interesting kind of the Apostles and the miraculous conversion of the world; and of the sinful heart—think of Magdalen, Paul, and so many converted souls. "I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me." Philip. iv. 13.

*b.* By increasing admirably man's strength. Read the acts of martyrs. Children, virgins and the aged were full of joy during the most dreadful torments. The poor, the suffering, the persecuted, how are they so joyful by grace? The just man preserves his virtue in the midst of a wicked world—by grace.

*c.* By enabling man to perform what is apparently impossible. The heroism of the Saints, as Abraham, Joseph, Stephen, Joannes a Deo, etc.

Therefore trust in divine grace, in God who is able to establish you. Rom. xvi. 25. Entertain a firm hope, for

3. Grace is given to everyone in sufficient measure, as is manifest

*a.* From God's nature; his sanctity, kindness and justice; for he will do what is good, will lead man to salvation, does not require what is impossible.

*b.* From the doctrine and practice of the Church. The sinner could have remained just, if he would make use of the grace.

Nevertheless hope not too much from grace, for you must know that

4. Grace does not destroy your liberty. Man can resist grace as Jerusalem and the Jewish people resisted.

*Peroration:* Grace is absolutely necessary, therefore acknowledge its value, by being grateful in your heart, and not

losing it. God takes away his grace from the resisting sinner. Cf. Prov. i, 24, 26, 28. Jesus leaves Judea and abides in Samaria. "They that were fed delicately have died in the streets; they that were brought up in scarlet, have embraced the dung." Lamentations iv, 5. Co-operate with divine grace; mere passiveness is not sufficient. Struggle, the grace is your shield; go forward, it is your staff; lift yourself up, it is the wing. Prepare your heart, that the mustard-seed may take root; remove the briars of inordinate earthly affections, that it may become a tree.

SAULNIER.

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## II.

## VENIAL SIN.

In the order of nature as well as of grace great things rise from small beginnings. Much less are little things to be despised in regard to the edifice of virtue. And yet it is a frequent blindness to make little of venial sins. Is venial sin of no consequence? You are mistaken.

PART I.

Venial sin in regard to God.

There are three considerations by which you can form an idea of the malice of venial sin, viz:

1. Who is offended by venial sin?

*a.* God the sovereign Lord, by insolent disobedience.

The whole creation bows to him, showing homage even in the smallest things; we are made for his service alone; he requires of us the strictest obedience. And yet, by a wilful venial sin, you refuse to obey him; you dishonor him by preferring your amusements, your advantage, which is the more objectionable, as obedience in little things is easier, without sacrifice and without a struggle. "Thus saith the Lord: How long refusest thou to submit to me?" Exod. x, 3. Are the masters of this world content with obedience in great things only?

*b.* God the Most Holy.

He hates sin, even in its smallest form, as a work of Satan, as poisonous fruit of damnable seed. "This is the will of God,

your sanctification." I Thess. iv, 3. "Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect." Mt. v, 48. Indifference as to sin is the mark of great impiety.

*c.* God the greatest benefactor of man.

He provides for every need; every moment of our life is marked with graces received, we are the objects of the most admirable love. It follows from this that we should love God in return from the bottom of our heart, and prove this love by doing what pleases and glorifies him. How ungrateful, and void of love is he to whom venial sin is a matter of indifference! If you do not crucify your Saviour, is it perhaps a trifle to scourge him?

2. How much is required to atone for venial sin?

*a.* Satisfaction of created beings is not sufficient.

Gather up the prayers, virtues, merits of all the Angels and Saints, they do not suffice to blot out the dishonor caused by venial sin. It requires an infinite satisfaction. That which you can never atone for yourself, you consider of no importance!

*b.* How will you get rid of venial sin?

By Christ's tears and blood. "Without the merits of Christ it is impossible to obtain remission of the least sin." St. Bernard. Conclude then, how great an outrage is venial sin. You will come to the same conclusion by considering the relation between venial sin and divine justice.

3. How God punishes venial sin.

*a.* Severely, sometimes even here on earth.

Think of Moses' punishment, because he hesitated for one moment to trust in God. Seventy thousand Israelites are slain to punish David's vanity which he manifested in taking up the census of his people. Fifty thousand and seventy Bethsamites had to die, because they had not looked at the Ark of God with due reverence. Other examples are Oza, II Kings, vi; Moses' sister, Exodus xii, 1, 10; King Ezechias, IV Kings xx, 17. The little boys mocking the prophet Elias ibd ii, 23, 24.

*b.* More severely yet in the next world.

Purgatory for many years, till the last farthing be paid.

Such is God's view of venial sin. Should not his measure be ours? Then avoid venial sin.

PART II.

We should abhor venial sin because of its effects upon our souls.

1. If often committed, without endeavoring to amend, venial sin debilitates the soul. It produces the same effects upon the soul as a lasting, though not deadly, disease produces upon the body; it destroys the power of the soul. St. Thomas Aq. "He that contemneth small things, shall fall little by little." Ecclus. xix, 1.

*a.* Conscience loses its tenderness.

The eye, unnaturally employed, loses its sharpness; deafness is caused by frequent, painful affection of the ears. Likewise conscience, when often injured, does not see or hear any more—it is shut up. Therefore, "walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not." John xii, 35.

*b.* Destestation of sin generally disappears.

A matter of course. What you are accustomed to will not terrify you. Your heart accustoms itself to the evil as its regular guest.

*c.* The force of will relaxes.

If you always yield to your passions, you will be unable to resist. Who is not master of himself in small things, how can he be master of himself in difficult things? "He that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater." Luke xvi, 10.

*d.* The necessary grace will not be granted.

"From him who hath not, will be taken away what he hath." The unfaithful steward is discharged.

2. Satan takes advantage of venial sins to lead the soul into perdition.

He does not make enormous pretensions from beginning. He will first tempt you to commit venial sins, will send, like Samson, little foxes into the harvest field. Think of the gradual progress, when he tempted our Saviour in the desert. After the soul is

weakened, impoverished, destitute of grace, bleeding at countless wounds, he will lead her wherever he pleases.

3. Thus the last consequence will be mortal sin.

Sad examples are Cain, David, Asa II Chron. xviii, Judas, etc. "Of one spark cometh a great fire." Eccles. xi, 34. "Who is not intent upon avoiding little sins, he will not long be free from great vices." St. Augustin.

*Peroration:* I trust that you shudder at the name of mortal sin; now then, destroy its roots, venial sins. It is in your power, else there would be no sin. "God requires nothing that is impossible." St. Augustin. It is possible to you by watchfulness, earnestness, exercise, frequent examination of your conscience, and by prayer.

TOURBE.

## Forty Hours' Devotion.

### I.

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST "THE BREAD THAT STRENGTHENS MAN'S HEART."

PSALMS CIII, 15.

Bread and wine, chosen by our Lord to be the forms of the Blessed Eucharist, are significant of the principal effect produced by this heavenly gift in our soul, viz.: strengthening of our soul.

I. OUR SOUL IS STRENGTHENED IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SIN.

1. As strengthening bread against sin, the holy Eucharist was prefigured

*a.* By the sacrifice of Melchisedech, in as much as it was offered after the struggle and victory of Abraham.

*b.* By the Paschal Lamb, which the sons of Israel had to eat in order to gain strength for their march through the desert amid continuous warfare, into the land of promise.

*c.* By the loaf of bread which Elias, the Prophet, received from an angel's hand, as viaticum, to strengthen him against the fury of Jezabel, and to wander up to the mountain of the Lord.

2. In particular, it is strengthening against our three enemies:

*a.* Against the world; viz.:

First, against the allurements of its pleasures and enjoyments it is the hidden manna, the bread from heaven comprising all flavor and producing in those who often receive it, disgust of the pleasures of the world. Experience proves this.

Secondly, against persecutions and insults, and considerations of men. The first Christians, as St. Cyprian tells us, did not consider themselves strong enough to bear martyrdom, unless they had received this strengthening bread from heaven. So many holy princes as St. Louis, Casimir of Poland, Francis Borgia, Leopold of Austria, received in this holy Sacrament the power of despising human respect and cowardly prejudices.

*b.* Against the flesh. Christ's frequent abiding in this living temple will surely keep it holy (I Cor. iii, 16, 17, and vi, 19;

II Cor. vi, 16); for the union is so intimate with Christ's holy flesh and blood. "If anyone of you does not so vividly feel the motions of his disorderly inclinations, he may thank the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ— for the power of this mystery apparently operates in him." St. Bernard.

*c.* Against Satan. "This mysterious blood drives off the evil spirits, and binds us to the angels and the Lord of angels." St. Chrysost. Comparison of a rebel general, who retires as soon as he is aware that his adversary joined a powerful king. Like lions sparkling with fire, we should leave the communion-table, says the same Chrysostom, for the evil spirits are then no longer dreadful to us, but we to them.

II. OUR SOUL IS STRENGTHENED FOR THE EXERCISE OF VIRTUE.

1. For the beginning of zeal. Our heart is inflamed by the heart of Jesus to make good resolutions.

2. For progressing in virtue. By no other Sacrament is sanctifying grace increased in such a degree as by the holy Eucharist. The king giving alms personally is more liberal than when giving through his servants.

3. For perfection in virtue. St. Catharina Senensis was surprised that not all hearts were ignited with love of God from this furnace of love. But love is the perfection of virtue. St. Wenceslaus burned so with the love of God, when he went to adore this Blessed Sacrament, that his companions used to warm their feet in his foot prints.

III. OUR SOUL IS STRENGTHENED FOR THE SUFFERING OF AFFLICTIONS.

"Come ye all that are afflicted and heavy laden," etc.

1. Jesus, the most amiable comforter of the afflicted, when he was wandering on earth, will not be less a comforter when he is in your heart.

2. The prince of peace, the God of all consolation, the friend, brother and bridegroom, speaks to the afflicted soul like Elkana to his mourning wife: "Why weepest thou; am not I better to thee than all earthly happiness?"

3. When the soul sees the face of her bridegroom deformed with blood, etc., she remembers the necessity of resembling him by suffering.

*Peroration:* If you desire to lead a virtuous life, frequent this blessed Sacrament. The preacher exhorts the different states of life to strive for the virtues particular to each state.

P. A. SCHERER.

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## II.

## JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OUR HOST.

By the marriage feast to which the people are invited, we understand the union of Christ with our soul, and the wedding-feast is the blessed Eucharist. Christ himself is our host, and his body is our food, his blood our drink. That we may follow his kind invitation, let us consider 1st, how Jesus treats us on his wedding day; and 2d, how we, the invited guests, should behave on that solemn occasion.

I. Jesus our host presents to us

1. The most precious food. For he is "rich to all that call upon him," Rom. x, 12, and anxious to distribute his riches. Father Alvarez, Confessor of St. Therese, when kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, saw Jesus in the consecrated host, his hands filled with costly presents, and heard him exclaim, "If some one would only come and take them from me." "Come, eat the bread and drink the wine which I have mingled for you." Prov. ix, 5. The principal food and the source of all other benefits is his sacred Body and Blood. "Take ye and eat, this is my body * * Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the new testament." There is nothing more precious in heaven nor on earth, than the Body and Blood of the God-man; it is indeed the greatest good, and therefore the most precious food.

2. The food most suitable to everyone's wants, as for instance,

*a.* The bread of strength and the oil of consolation, whereby he refreshes and strengthens those who are afflicted with temptations and sufferings, those persecuted by enemies and dangers.

St. Clara, when the Turks entered her convent, took refuge to the Blessed Sacrament, whereupon the enemies partly fled, partly *fell from the wall.* Application.

*b.* Divine wisdom which he presents to those desirous of salvation, as for instance to St. Thomas Aqu. to whom Christ himself said: "Thou hast written well on me." He had taken his science at the foot of the Cross and in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, before which he knelt whole days and nights.

*c.* The delightful wine of celestial joy and happiness given to the pious and just. To St. Francis Xavier the visit to the Blessed Sacrament was a recreation from his labors and fatigue in the missions of the Indies. A special commandment was required for St. Aloysius to make him leave the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

*d.* Celestial viaticum for the journey into eternity. Strengthened by this food, we can wander like Elias of old to the mount of God, to his beatific vision.

II. How the guests should behave.

1. They should joyfully and willingly follow the invitation of the Divine Host, and partake of this feast with delight.

*a.* Many make various objections against receiving Holy Communion like those we read of in the Gospel. But most of them find their full explanation in the words of Jesus: "They *will* not come." The good will is lacking.

*b.* They draw the divine wrath upon themselves. Jesus said that none of these men that were called should taste his supper. They cannot expect the grace of receiving the Blessed Sacrament in their last hour.

2. Appear in a decent dress as regards the body, and much more in regard to the soul, either in the white garment of innocence or in a garment washed and cleansed by tears of penance. The guest having no wedding garment was cast into the exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

3. At supper-table the guests should manifest

*a.* Humility. "Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my soul shall

be healed." Mtt. viii, 8. "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Luke v, 8.

*b.* Reverence. "Whence is this to me, that not only the mother of my Lord, but my Lord himself should come to me?" Luke i, 43. Kneeling at the feet of Jesus, we may exclaim with Thomas: "My Lord, and my God." John xx, 28.

*c.* Attention to every word of our Divine Host. "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me." Ps. lxxxiv, 9. "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth." I Kings iii, 10. Listen to his words, and your heart will burn within you.

*Peroration:* "Behold, I have prepared my dinner * * all things are ready, come ye to the wedding." Mtt. xxii, 4. "Eat, O friends, and drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved." Cant. v, 1.

L. MEHLER.

## On the Celebration of a First Mass.

### THE PRIEST COMPARED WITH THE ANGELS.

The words of the Psalmist: "Thou hast made him a little less than the angels," though extolling every man, apply pre-eminently to the priest. And if Holy Scripture compares bishops to angels, (Apoc. ii, 1. sqq.) the application to the priest is obvious. One of the Holy Fathers goes so far as to say, if a priest and an angel were to meet him, he would first make his reverence to the priest. Indeed, though the priest ceases not to be a feeble man, his dignity and sacred functions elevate him to the ranks of angels.

I. THE PRIEST RANKS WITH THE ANGELS.

1. Because of the exalted position he holds.

*a.* The angels are pure spirits, above sensual lusts and needs, endowed with sublime knowledge of celestial things, and with abundant grace.

*b.* The priests, though *wandering in feeble flesh*, are called to similar perfection. They have sacrificed to their exalted vocation so many earthly enjoyments and prospects. Especially, to follow the duties of their vocation, they have renounced matrimony, so that the Lord's words may be applied to them: "They shall neither marry, nor be given in marriage, but shall be as the angels of God in Heaven." Mt. xxii, 30. They are furnished with the science of divine things, and with abundant graces, and by the sacrament of Holy Orders they are elevated to a higher order, (*sacramentum ordinis.*)

2. Because of the sacred nature of his functions.

*a.* Jesus says of the angels in heaven, that they always see the face of the Father who is in heaven. Mat. xviii, 10. They are described as such who, without cessation, contemplate and praise God and his holy mysteries, and worship even in God's houses on earth. So in the temple of the Old Covenant. (Isa. vi, 2-4,) and in the churches of the New Covenant. (I Cor. xi, 10.) It is by angels that God proclaimed his law, (Act. viii,

26); it is by them that he announced the Incarnation and so many other divine deeds.

*b.* All of this may be said pre-eminently of the priest: his familiarity with God in our sacred mysteries, the greatness of powers conferred upon him, wherein the angels are his inferiors; his angelic mission as messenger of God and interpreter of his revelation.

The angels themselves acknowledge the priests as their equals. For, when John would fall before the feet of the angel to adore him, he said to him: "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren who have the testimony of Jesus." Apoc. xix, 10.

II RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE PRIESTS AND THE GUARDIAN ANGELS.

1. The priests are the visible guardian angels of the people. Like the guardian angels

*a.* They point out the way to heaven. As the angel accompanied young Tobias, as God led his people to the Land of Promise by an angel, so the priests lead the little ones as well as grown persons on their path to heaven.

*b.* They protect them against dangers, exhort, warn and threaten, in order to confirm the just, to recall those who went astray, as angels guarded Lot and saved his life, when Sodom was destroyed, and an angel protected Tobias against the fish that would devour him.

*c.* They cleanse and heal the soul in the bath of regeneration, and more frequently in the sacrament of penance, as the angel of God healed the sick at the pool of Bethesda.

*d.* They strengthen them with the heavenly food of God's word and the most Blessed Sacrament, as the angel brought Hagar to the spring and Habacuc to hungry Daniel.

*e.* They tie the bonds of matrimony and teach how to live in accordance with God's will in the married state, and how to raise good children, as the angel did in regard to Tobias and Sara.

*f.* They contend for the welfare of the Christian people

and of individuals, viz: for faith, grace and virtue, against all the enemies of salvation, like the angel in the camps of Sennacherib, or the angel who, delivering Peter out of prison, protected him against Herod.

*g.* They assist the dying, like the angel who, rubbing the eyes of old Tobias, restored his eyesight before his departure, (application to extreme unction,) and like the angel who comforted our Saviour in his agony. It follows that

2. The people should fulfill their duties towards the priests:

*a.* They should pray for them. Jesus exhorted his Apostles to pray for laborers in God's vineyard. Meaning of the ember-week.

*b.* They should show them reverence, because of their high dignity and sacred functions. "Let the priests who rule well be esteemed worthy of double honor; especially those who labor in the word and doctrine." I Tim. v, 17. They should show

*c.* Gratitude, remembering the sacrifices for the people, and their important services.

*d.* Confidence in them as messengers of God, who sincerely wish to promote the good of the people.

*e.* Ready obedience, else all their blessings, administering of the sacraments, all the teaching and exorting would be in vain.

*Peroration:* When Jacob wrestled with the angel all night, he said to him, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless me." Likewise we will not let this new ordained angel of God go, unless he bless us all and the faithful departed * * * and we in turn will bless him and pray for him, that his vocation may prove the source of everlasting blessing for him and for others.

ABBOT ALOYSIUS ROEGGL.

## On the Laying of a Corner-stone of a New Church,

AND ON SIMILAR OCCASIONS.

Zacheus and his house had a bad reputation amongst the inhabitants of Jericho, as is to be inferred from the words of the Gospel: "And when they all saw it, they murmured saying: "that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." St. Luke, xix, 7. Jesus came into the house of the sinner, and with Jesus came sanctity, also; by his grace he came into the heart of the sinner, and converted and sanctified it. Wherever God abides, there "holiness becometh thy house, O Lord, unto length of days." Psal. xcii, 5. God chiefly abides in three houses; the house above, i. e.: heaven; God's house on earth, i. e.: the Holy Church, and God's house within each of us, i. e.: the heart of man.

### I. GOD'S HOUSE ABOVE—HEAVEN.

1. Heaven is the house, the abode of God. "Thus saith the Lord: Heaven is my throne." Isa. lxvi, 1. "To thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven." Ps. cxxii, 1. "In my Father's house there are many mansions." St. John xiv, 2.

2. Heaven is the place of destination for all creatures endowed with understanding, the faithful angels and pious men. There our firstborn brother went before us to prepare a place for us (St. John xiv, 2). Heaven is our own country, our home, "for we know that, if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven." II Cor. v, 1. In heaven "we shall be filled with the good things of his house." Ps. lxiv, 5. Lift up your eyes towards heaven and think of your beautiful home, and with St. Ignatius of Loyola, you will exclaim: How loathsome is this world to me, when I behold heaven above me!

3. But holiness becometh this house of God. Ps. xcii, 5.

*a.* There shall not enter into the City of God anything defiled. Apoc. xxi, 27. "Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle, or who shall rest in thy holy hill? He that walketh without

blemish, and worketh justice." Ps. xiv, 1. "The innocent in hands, and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain." Ps. xxiii, 4.

*b.* "Follow * * * holiness, without which no man shall see God." Heb. xii, 14. You must do penance in order to obtain forgiveness of your sins, including venial sins, by which heaven is locked for a time, and try to obtain a release from the temporal punishment for the sins which are forgiven, by works of penance and indulgences.

II. THE HOUSE OF GOD ON EARTH—THE CHURCH.

1. The Church is the house of God, because it is there that he reveals his benignity, and desires to be worshiped.

*a.* The temple at Jerusalem, though very inferior to a Christian church, is called the house of God. "My house shall be called the house of prayer." Is. lvi, 7. Jesus himself applied this word to the temple: "My house shall be called the house of prayer." Mtt. xxi, 13.

*b.* So much more Christian Churches are houses of God, as God's Son dwells there in his adorable human nature, too. Therefore the holy Fathers say that the churches are heaven on earth, and in them are verified the words of Apoc. xxi, 3: "Behold the tabernacle of God with men!"

2. Holiness becometh this house of God also.

*a.* The Christian churches are sacred: they are the abode of the Holy of Holies, who is the source of holiness; whatever is done in them, tends to sanctification of man. They are consecrated for divine service by a bishop, not by a simple priest—are distinct from the dwellings of men by structure and ornamentation; everything confirms that the "temple of God is holy." I Cor. iii, 17.

*b.* Therefore we ought to keep them holy:

By promoting God's honor by devout prayers and assisting at the Holy Sacrifice with due reverence. We have to do the same wherewith we hope to be once occupied in heaven, where "the four and twenty ancients fell down before him that sitteth on the throne, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever."

Apoc. iv, 10. By making use of the means of salvation presented to you in church, and showing reverence for your church and its surroundings. How often are you deficient in this reverence?

III. THE HOUSE OF GOD WITHIN US—THE HUMAN HEART.

1. Human heart is a house of God, if it is free from sin and in the state of grace. "If any one love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make an abode with him." John xiv, 23. "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" I Cor. iii, 16. Then your heart will rejoice: "a secure mind is like a continual feast." Prov. xv, 15. The beauty of an innocent soul is attractive to God himself; he gives her countless proofs of his love. "How beautiful art thou, my love, how beautiful art thou?" Cant. iv, 1.

2. Holiness becometh this house of God. The soul ornamented with sanctifying grace, is a living and the most beautiful temple. Therefore guard this treasure of grace, by carefully guarding your senses (robbers who want to despoil the churches usually enter through the windows); by shunning all bad company and occasions of sin, and especially by prayer. Mtt. xxvi, 41; "Watch ye and pray, that you enter not into temptation."

*Peroration:* By the gracious visit of Jesus is salvation come to the house of Zacheus; salvation is come to this house also, since Jesus abides here. Honor this house by making your heart worthy of receiving the graces spent in it. These graces will make your heart a temple of God, to find rest in the eternal house, in Heaven.

FROM A PERIODICAL.

# ERRATA:

Page 3, line 27, convertiminis, read *convertimini.*
" 4, " 7, sapientieam, read *sapientiam.*
" 4, " 25, enable, read *enabled.*
" 7, " 17, summatiom, read *summatim.*
" 10, " 22, will be, read *was.*
" 17, " 12, humilate, read *humiliate.*
" 31, " 4, Leo, read *Lev.*
" 36, " 26, puxitur, read *punitur.*
" 38, " 24, omnipotance, read *omnipotence.*
" 39, " 17, Lord, read *Word.*
" 47, " 11, observe, read *observed.*
" 49, " 31, Kainites, read *Cainites.*
" 82, " 21, asketh, read *askest.*
" 88, " 28, full, read *free.*
" 89, " 7, men, read *man.*
" 92, " 5, priest, read *priests.*
" 94, " 2, leave out "than."
" 96, " 7, resounds, read *resound.*
" 97, " 16, Solaans, read *Solanus.*
" 101, " 6, than, read *as.*
" 105, " 21, fugative, read *fugitive.*
" 106, " 26, disign, read *design.*

## Septuagesima Sunday.

### I.

### LUKEWARMNESS IN THE SERVICE OF GOD.

"About the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing, and he said unto them: Why stand you there all the day idle?" Mt. xx, 6.

Is not this a true image of the world? How many are the idlers whom our Lord, beholds whenever he turns His eyes to the world, to see the ways and occupations of His children! * * * The worst, and at the same time the most frequent, kind of idleness, however, is the idleness with regard to our supernatural vocation, the salvation of our souls. Men buy and sell, marry and are married. They acquire temporal goods and possessions, and attend to the affairs of this world. But they neither think of God, nor of their eternal destiny. And if they make any efforts towards saving their souls, how cold are their prayers, how fruitless all their works, because performed with a lukewarm heart? To warn you against this fatal idleness, I will speak to you on this tepidity, this dangerous indifference, in regard to good works. I say, then, tepidity, or lukewarmness, is

I.

DIRECTLY OPPOSED TO OUR TRUE DESTINY.

Our destiny on earth is, to adore and love God, and thereby to save our souls. Who does not see how incompatible with this destiny a state of lukewarmness and indifference must be?

1. We are in this world, that we may *adore* and *serve* God. Is an adoration and service, carelessly rendered, deserving of the name? What master will tolerate idlers in his service? God has no idle servants in the whole extent of His magnificent Kingdom, except in the human family. From the beginning of their glorious existence, the Holy Angels have been intent upon the praise and adoration of their Lord and King. They are ministering spirits, ascending and descending between heaven and earth, the ever ready and faithful messengers of their God. Christian art in imi-

tation of the pattern in the sanctuary at Jerusalem, depicts these first-born sons of heaven as having wings, and as being endowed with youthful beauty and strength, as models of a prompt and untiring service. All other beings incessantly fulfil the task for which they have been created; the fire, the water, the fertile bosom of the earth, the stars of heaven, are in continual motion, swift in performing the will of their Creator. Man alone is lazy and slothful in the service of God; man alone is indolent, lukewarm. Whatever he does for God, he does only by halves. Our life is an uninterrupted chain of broken promises.

2. We are in this world, that we may *love* God. A cold love is no love. As water extinguishes fire, so tepidity is the death of love. Love is zeal, is warmth, is enthusiasm, which is the reverse of tepidity.

It is this fiery, untiring love, that God requires of us. He gave us the commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Lk. x, 27. Every faculty of our soul is to be employed in loving God. "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled." xii, 49. The Son of God sent his graces and gifts on earth, nay, the Holy Ghost himself, to kindle in our hearts the fire of His love.

How far is our love of God from this true and perfect love which the Lord receives from all His friends and saints? We protest before heaven and earth: "O God, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," and as soon as our Lord requires of us a proof of our love, every spark of that divine fire vanishes and dies. Every precept of religion is too arduous, every sacrifice too painful. The love for a creature, a sensual pleasure, suffice to banish the love of God from our hearts. And with a love so weak and cold, with hands so empty, so disinclined to labor and sacrifice, we presume to gain the affections of the Divine Heart! A love void of fire and vigor, of life and activity; a love without the evidence of good works, is an empty sound, is a lie and a delusion, despised by the Lord.

3. The *salvation* of our souls is the most important task of

our life. The service of God is the means of obtaining this grand end. Life, time, numberless graces, have been granted to us for the same purpose.

Do you not see that tepidity is incompatible with this task of our life. God ash decreed unto each one of us a certain space of time, within which we must complete our task, and whatever is left undone at the expiration of that time cannot be made up, but is irretrievably lost forever. The temple of God in our hearts must be finished when the Lord shall come. He who is not daily employed about his wedding garment, will arrive in the next world without *any* wedding garment, and will not be found worthy of assisting at the "marriage feast of the Lamb."

Oh, be not deceived! you cannot depend on your irregular attendance of divine service, nor on your few confessions and communions, nor on your few works of charity. The greatest, the most important task, demands *all* your efforts.

Or do you suppose that worldly business and temporal cares suffice to secure for you the beatific vision? The Lord says: "What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" And to the busy sister of Mary He said: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and art troubled about many things. But one thing is necessary." Lk. x, 41. A life spent *merely* and *exclusively* in the most important earthly pursuits, is a lost existence.

II.

IT HAS THE MOST LAMENTABLE CONSEQUENCES.

Of the *fatal consequences* resulting from the state of lukewarmness, I will mention but three. He who is in this state omits many good works; he will fall into many and grievous sins; and the end will be eternal condemnation.

1. St. John describes the state of a lukewarm Christian in this graphic manner: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest: I am rich, and made wealthy, and I have need of nothing; and thou

knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Apoc. iii, 15—17. Whilst the zealous Christian strives to verify in himself the words of the Apostle: "He who soweth in blessings, shall also reap of blessings," (II Cor. ix, 6,) the lukewarm Christian is careless with regard to prayer, sacraments, divine service, works of charity, etc. However splendid, therefore, your appearance before the world may be, before God you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Oh, that we might all, following the advice of St. John, (Apoc, iii, 18.) buy the gold of love for God and our neighbor! Oh, that we might be clothed in the white garments of the Christian virtues, that our poverty and sinfulness might be covered.

2. *Tepidity leads to many sins.* The state of indecision cannot last long. "Let him that thinketh to stand, take heed, lest he fall." I Cor. x, 12. The just man and the saint are liable to fall; but the indifferent Christian, who, in the tepidity of his heart has not even the earnest will to combat the temptations and dangers of sin, cannot but fall. As he does not heed venial sins, the evil propensities of our corrupt nature will grow in his heart without being noticed, till venial sins are succeeded by mortal sins. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is great." Lk. xvi, 10.

3. *The end is final perdition.* "I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth." Who can love a man who is neither good nor bad? Who can drink water that is neither cold nor warm? When God sees that the lukewarm Christian does not endeavor to become a decided adherent and follower of his Lord, He withdraws the graces that have been so often abused. When the fruit tree, in spite of the good care it has received, after years of waiting yields no fruit, it only deserves to be cut down and cast into the fire. It is a fact that great sinners are sooner converted than lukewarm Christians. St. Bernardine of Sienna said he had seen usurers and harlots doing penance, but he had never witnessed the conversion of a lukewarm Christian. Tom. vi.

Sermo vii. "Do penance and do the first works, or else I shall come to thee, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place." Apoc. ii, 5.

*Peroration.* The surest way to heaven is to aspire to the highest degree of sanctity. He who does not strive to climb up to the highest round in the ladder of perfection, cannot stand on the lowest for any length of time. Is it not from the evangelical counsels, being as they are, diametrically opposed to lukewarmness, that all great deeds and heroic achievements in the Church have proceeded? He who seeks for the most comfortable way to heaven, will, no doubt, entirely miss it. "No man putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Lk. ix, 62. Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## SAVE YOUR SOUL.

If temporal affairs impose upon man a large measure of labór and solicitude, how much more should he exercise the utmost diligence in behalf of his eternal welfare? If he who strives for a corruptible crown has to use such great exertion, the efforts of him who strives for an incorruptible crown, should be still greater. I Cor. ix, 25. God has called us into his Church that we should "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." Phil. ii, 12. He has provided for us an infinite reward, if we work as well as we can; "for he that is idle will never partake of the kingdom of God." St. Bern.

He exhorts us, therefore unceasingly, to labor in this vineyard (our soul). And, indeed, if our souls do not profit by it, "what hath a man more of all his labor?" Eccle. i, 3. Though busy all their lifetime, "the men of riches found nothing in their hands." Ps. lxxv, 6. Blindness of men!

### PART I.

### NOTHING IS MORE NECESSARY THAN TO SAVE OUR SOULS.

I. The chief solicitude of God is for our salvation. "For nothing is God more solicitous than the salvation of souls." St. Ambrose.

1. What has the Father done for your soul? "He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight." Eph. i, 4. Before He created anything, He thought of our happiness, and the first work of His creation was heaven, the place of our eternal happiness. Man himself was created with the desire for happiness, and the means of obtaining it. Infer from this, what is the "unum necessarium."

2. What has the Son done for our salvation? Our true happiness had been sacrificed, our hope of heaven forfeited, by an infinite malice. But the "Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Lk. xix, 10 Who can describe His afflictions, etc., from the manger to the cross, for the sake of our salvation?

3. What has the Holy Ghost done for it? He inspired the prophets to prepare the way of the Saviour to come; He wrought the miracle of the Incarnation in the chaste womb of the Virgin; He filled the Apostles with light and strength; He has guarded and preserved inviolate the deposit of truth in His Holy Church; He sanctifies every Christian by the holy sacraments; He is active everywhere, and in a miraculous manner.

And if the Triune God, Whose bliss and happiness our salvation cannot augment, is so solicitous for our souls and their eternal salvation, should not a like solicitude be ours also?

II. The question is of everlasting weal or woe. "We stand here between two eternities, we cannot but fall into the one or the other." St. Ambrose.

God has the laurel and the lightning in readiness, and we may choose the one or the other. Important choice.

1. With the loss of our souls all is lost. Of what use will then be riches and honors?

Think of Dives! The damned curse the objects of their former sinful love.

2. Irrevocably lost! Ismael never entered his father's house, "he dwelt in the wilderness." Gen. xxi, 20. Those invited to the wedding who did not come, and the foolish Virgins, are

shut out forever. "If the tree fall to the south, or to the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be." Eccle. xi, 3.

III. It is, therefore, that Jesus warns us with the most tender anxiety

1. To work our salvation *before* all things. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." Mt. vi, 33. "What doth it profit a man," etc. xvi, 26. "But one thing is necessary." Lk. x, 42.

2. To work our salvation *in* all things. "Whatever ye do, do it in the honor of God." You work for your salvation, if you fulfil the duties of your state of life in a proper manner, *i. e.* conscientiously, out of obedience, with a joyful heart, in honor of God. Any calling can lead us to heaven. "Watch, ye, praying at all times." Lk. xxi, 36.

3. To take care of our salvation at *all times*, and give it *our own personal* attention. "My soul is continually in my hands." Ps. cxviii, 109. Nobody but we ourselves can work out our salvation; not even God, without our co-operation. Ours will be the reward, ours must be the labor to deserve it.

From God's works and his warnings we know that the salvation of our souls should be the principal object of our solicitude, and yet

PART II.

NOTHING IS MORE RARE THAN THIS SOLICITUDE.

I. Everywhere we may observe an all-absorbing care for temporal affairs and earthly possessions.

1. The heart of man is attached to them; restless desire to acquire them; great sorrow at their loss.

2. All activity of man is centered upon them. Men are groveling in the dust.

II. Negligence in regard to heavenly things.

1. No earnest examination of the condition of the soul. Indifference even to the greatest dangers, nay, to the undoubted loss of salvation by mortal sin.

2. Carelessness in regard to the means of salvation: *Prayer*, though so necessary, (Watch ye and pray,) either neglected, or

said in haste, without devotion. Fasting hardly known by name. God's word, though the salt, the balsam, the light, the staff of the soul, is abhorred, as if it were some sad tidings. The sacraments not received, the healing power of alms-giving not used as means against covetousness, or indifference in regard to the rewards and goods of heaven.

III. Men appear to be without conscience in regard to the salvation of others.

1. Careless parents, educating their children for everything except the one thing necessary.

2. Cruel seducers, showing heartless indifference to their own and others' salvation.

Verily, a terrible carelessness! Do you not feel guilty of it?

IV. Let us look back at our past life.

1. How many opportunities has God granted us to save our souls? Time, the word of God, misfortunes, etc.

2. How little is it that we have given to God? What use have we made of our time? For whom have we labored? Have we laid up treasures for the world to come?

3. What folly! All our trouble for nothing! We run after the mists and clouds, and neglect that which is everlasting. We frustrate the merciful designs and endeavors of God.

*Peroration.* Sursum corda! Lift up your eyes to your home above the clouds. Make haste to enter into God's vineyard and recover what has been neglected. Fratres, tempus redimamus! Our salvation *in all things*, our salvation *above all things!*

Tourbé.

## Sexagesima Sunday.

### I.

### THE HARDENED SINNER LIKENED TO A ROCK.

"And some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away." Lk. viii, 6.

Pythagoras laid down the rule: "Ne multis verbis pauca comprehendas, sed paucis multa." Our divine Saviour Himself established the same rule by His example. For a proof, I refer to the Gospel of to-day. How excellently does He describe the riches as thorns, the word of God as fertile seed. And when He calls the evil spirits "fowls of the air," who does not see at the first glance, that what birds of prey are in the order of nature, the devils are in the order of grace!

And he designates a *hardened sinner* by the word "rock," because there is a striking resemblance found between them, the investigation of which will prove very interesting, and shall therefore, form the subject of our present meditation. I say then, the hardened sinner is likened to a rock, because he 1. neither sees nor hears; 2. because he is destitute of taste, and smell; and 3. because he is destitute of feeling, and without life and motion.

#### I. THE HARDENED SINNER NEITHER SEES NOR HEARS.

1. "He has *eyes and sees not*," (Ps. cxiii, 14,) we may truly say of the hardened sinner. He is blind to the many warnings by which God calls upon him to do penance and amend his life. In spite of the most portentous signs and miracles, Pharao remained blind and hardened. Judas had heard his Master say: "Woe to that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed." Lk. xxii, 22. He received the morsel, and upon his inquiring: "Is it I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered: "Thou hast said it." Yet all in vain. The heart of the unhappy Apostle remained perverse and hardened. The Pharisees explained the miracles wrought by Jesus as the work of Beelzebub. The Gentiles ascribed to witchcraft the miracles and the heroic fortitude of the first Christians.

They all had eyes to see, and saw not.

Is it otherwise with the hardened sinner now-a-days? Is he not blind to all warnings? Though he be visited with many plagues, like Pharao of old, with diseases and misfortunes, he blames secondary causes for it.

Oh, how lamentable is the condition of such Christians! Blinded as they are, they plunge heedlessly into eternal perdition, as Pharao plunged into the angry waves of the Red Sea, as the Israelites rushed into the swords of the Amalecites and Chanaanites. Numb. xiv, 40. "They are all turned to their own course, as a horse rushing to the battle." Jerem. viii, 6. Let us not, voluntarily, close our eyes to what it behooves us most of all to see and heed.

2. The hardened sinner has *ears, and hears not.* Though he has ears to hear, yet with Pharao he says: "Who is the Lord, that I should hear His voice? I know not the Lord." Ett. v, 2. He is deaf to the word of God, thus despising his only means of salvation. He says to God with the wicked: "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Job, xxi, 14. "He would not understand that he might do well." Ps. xxxv, 4. How utterly hopeless is the condition of one who is spiritually deaf, Jesus insinuated at the healing of the dumb and deaf, when, "looking up to heaven, *He groaned.*" Mk. vii, 34. As long as Pharao listened to Moses, there was yet hope of his conversion. But his words: "Get thee from me, and beware thou see not my face any more," challenged and drew down the vengeance of the destroying angel. The time of grace was past. Exod. x, 28, etc. Was it otherwise with the hardened Jews? Their perdition was near at hand, when the Saviour, to whose warnings they would not listen, said to them: "Henceforth you shall see me no more, till you say: "Hosanna, who cometh in the name of the Lord." i. e., till the last day.

II. THE HARDENED SINNER IS DESTITUTE OF TASTE AND SMELL.

1. He has no *taste* for spiritual things. He longs for sensual pleasures, for piles of gold and silver, and the other goods of

this world. He loathes the manna of spiritual food, such as prayer, the word of God, the Holy Sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice of Mass. And if protracted nausea against bodily food is a sure indication of impending disease or approaching death, should it not be a sure indication of a dangerous disorder of your soul, and imminent eternal death if you abhor every spiritual food? "The soul of the Israelites abhorred all manner of meat, and they drew nigh even to the gates of death." Ps. cvi, 18.

The manna was the figure of the food whereby our souls are nourished into life everlasting; it was particularly a type of the Holy Eucharist. Would to God, the carnal-minded Israelites of old did not also but too often typify the professed followers of Christianity. Let us endeavor to acquire again a relish for the spiritual food of prayer, the word of God, and the Most Blessed Sacrament. This relish and taste for spiritual food is not only a true refreshment in this world, but will be rewarded by the possession and enjoyment of God and eternal happiness in the next.

2. As if he were a rock, the hardened sinner is destitute of what may be called the spiritual sense of *smell*, in consequence of which he does not perceive the abomination of sin. Even some philosophers of heathen nations were so deeply convinced of the turpitude of sin, that they earnestly warned against it, even if it could be committed in secret. And we? We possess the most perfect moral law; a law which came directly from heaven, declaring sin to be a rebellion against the Most High, the baneful source of every evil, and the cause of hell with its never-ending punishments. Yet all these considerations do not prevent us from committing sin. Though you are aware, poor sinner, that you become an object of detestation in the eyes of God and of every honest man, you still love and cherish sin. As the ravens and vultures relish the stench of a vile carcass, whilst the pure bee keeps far from it, so you relish the stench of sin. "The wicked man when he is come into the depth of sin, contemneth; but ignominy and reproach follow him." Prov. xviii, 3. Verily, the hardened sinner has lost both shame and fear. "Thou hadst a harlot's forehead; thou wouldst not blush." Jerem, iii. 3, Cf. Apoc. xvii, 5.

III.

The hardened sinner is like a rock, *devoid of all feeling*, being insensible alike of the visitations and chastisements of God. As the rock is not moved by a stroke, so God strikes and chastises the hardened sinner, without moving him to penance. "O Lord, thou hast struck them, and they have not grieved. Thou hast bruised them, and they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than the rock, and they have refused to return." Jerem. v. 3. "Though thou shouldst bray a fool in the mortar, as when a pestle striketh upon sodden barley, his folly would not be taken from him." Prov. xxvii, 22.

Pharao and his servants remained obdurate in spite of the ten plagues. Saul, though God had heaped benefits upon him, though struck severely by the hand of the Lord, far from changing his perverse mind, committed suicide. Judas, in spite of the tender expostulations from the very lips of his divine Master, in spite of the wonderful charity and humility of that same Master in washing his feet, persevered in his resolution to betray Him. Thus the hardened sinner becomes more perverse in consequence of a divine chastisement. "His heart shall be as hard as a stone, and as firm as a smith's anvil." Job, xli, 15. He may say in the words of Holy Scripture: "They have beaten me, but I was not sensible of pain: they drew me, and I felt not." Prov. xxiii, 35. He is like a drunken man, overpowered by sleep. You are not able to arouse him. True, his conscience reproaches him; but as you strike the rock, in vain, so he is not sensible of the strokes of his conscience. "If the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots, you also may do well when you have learned evil." As a vessel filled to the brim, gives no sound, so conscience, when filled with sin and vice, will speak no longer. But who does not see that this silence is the silence of death?

*Peroration.* How lamentable is the condition of the hardened sinner! His cold and stony heart is not warmed by the rays of grace, nor softened by the tears of repentance. As the

rock, when once in motion, in consequence of its own natural weight, is continually rolling downward, so the hardened sinner falls from vice to vice, and finally into the depth of hell. Without a miracle of grace his course cannot be arrested. And as we have no right to ask for miracles, let us never place an obstacle in the way of grace, lest our heart, in consequence of repeated resistance, be hardened into a rock, and like Pharao, who, with his army, was sunk to the bottom of the Red Sea like a stone, (Exod. xv, 5,) we may find a miserable death in the sea of our sins. M. Faber.

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## II.

## HOW WE MUST HEAR AND KEEP THE WORD OF GOD.

The word of God, as expressive of God's will, is the rule of our conduct, giving light to our understanding, consoling and strengthening us in our weakness, and arousing us from the sleep of sin; it is thus for our instruction, consolation and correction. But our heart must be prepared so as to be good ground, if the word of God is to bring forth fruit. It is on this preparation of our heart that I propose to address you; wherefore I will answer the following questions:

First—How must we hear the word of God?

Secondly—How must we follow the word of God?

### PART I.

### HOW MUST WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD?

I. With *eagerness*, as it is the spiritual food necessary for every soul.

1. For those who *are ignorant*, who are taught

*a.* What they have to *believe*, in order to please God. "Without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder of them that seek him." Heb. xi, 6. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Rom. x, 17.

*b.* What they have to *do*, or to avoid, in order to fulfill the will of God. "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths." Ps. cxviii, 105.

2. For those who are *lukewarm* and *indifferent*, who must be aroused by the word of God, and exhorted to perseverance. "Unless Thy law had been my meditation, I had then perhaps perished in my abjection. I have inclined my heart to do Thy justifications forever for the reward." Ps. cxviii, 92, 112.

3. For *the sinners*, who by its threatenings are exhorted to return to God by penance and conversion. "Pierce thou my flesh with thy fear: for I am afraid of thy judgments." Ps. cxviii, 120. "For the word of God is living and effectual, and more penetrating than any two-edged sword, and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit." Heb. iv, 12. Say with David: "I opened my mouth and panted, because I longed for thy commandments." Ps. cxviii, 131. We must hear the word of God

II. With *close attention*, for it is wholesome food for our souls.

1. It is a spiritual blessing, surpassing in value all earthly riches and advantages. He that teaches a science useful for this world, will find attentive hearers. But, "seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice." Mt. vi, 33.

2. How great this blessing was once, you learn from the effects of the word of God preached by St. Peter, when, at the beginning of his ministry, 3,000—5,000 souls were converted. Act. ii, 41, and 4. By the preaching of St. Paul, Lydia and her household were converted. Act. xvi, 14. Even King Agrippa said: "In a little thou persuadest me to become a Christian." Act. xxvi, 23.

3. How little is the fruit you receive from the word of God, because you do not pay this close attention, or your mind is entirely absent! Where are your thoughts during the sermon? It is with good reason that Jesus cried out: "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." We must hear the word of God

III. *With due reverence*, on account of its dignity.

1. It is God's word. St. Augustin calls it the body of Christ. What punishment does he deserve who, as it were, casts away and loses Christ's body by his carelessness?

2. Reverence is shown even to the word of man, to which

you listen without making disturbance, your head uncovered, as a token of respect. When Aod the Prophet said to Eglon, King of Moab: "I have a word from God to thee," "he forthwith rose up from his throne." Judg. iii, 20. Learn, oh Christian, from this example of an idolatrous king, how to show reverence to the word of God.

3. Instead of ctiticizing the sermons, it would be more according to the spirit of Christianity to "bring forth fruit from them in patience." "He that despiseth you despiseth me." Lk. x, 16. "For it is not you that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Mk. xiii, 11.

PART II.

HOW MUST WE FOLLOW THE WORD OF GOD?

I. We must *keep* it. We do so

1. By impressing it on our hearts. As the Israelites had to write all the words of the Law upon the stones (Deut. xxvii, 8), so we should write God's word in our hearts. We should eat the word of God as our daily bread, that we may have no reason to lament: "My heart is withered, because I forgot to eat my bread." Ps. ci, 5.

2. Is this rule observed now-a-days by the generality of Christians? What forms the subject of their conversation after divine service? As to parents in particular, do they follow the old family tradition of examining their children about the sermon and Christian instruction?

II. We must *apply* it to our spiritual needs.

1. The word of God should lead you to self-knowledge. St. Bernard calls it a mirror of truth, which flatters nobody, by which every one sees himself as he is.

2. You should put it into practice. "We will do all the words of the Lord which he hath spoken," said the Israelites (Ex. xxiv, 3), and soon after adored a molten calf. l. c. xxxii, 1, ff. Therefore "be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." James I, 22. "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." l. c., 18.

*Peroration:* Hear, then, the word of God with the right disposition, observe it in the right manner, and it will yield fruit a hundred fold. Hiller.

## Quinquagesima Sunday.

### I.

### MEDITATE FREQUENTLY ON THE PASSION OF CHRIST.

"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and all things shall be accomplished which were written by the prophets concerning the Son of man. For he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon. And after they have scourged him, they will put him to death." Lk. xviii, 31. Whilst the world, *especially in these days*, is given up to earthly and sensual pleasures, and God is offended, and immortal souls are ruined, the Church knows of no better means of reconciling God and leading her children back upon the way of salvation, than the pious meditation on the sufferings of her bridegroom, and therefore endeavors, by the Gospel of this day, to renew the remembrance thereof in the hearts of the faithful. In compliance with this desire of our holy mother, the Church, I invite you most earnestly to meditate frequently on the passion of our dear Lord, and for this end I will show to you that this devotion is very acceptable to God, very profitable to ourselves, and very easy to practice.

I. TO MEDITATE ON THE SACRED PASSION OF OUR SAVIOR IS EXCEEDINGLY ACCEPTABLE IN THE EYES OF GOD.

1. For what reason did Jesus leave the impression of His bloody and disfigured countenance on the cloth Veronica presented to Him? Why did He take care to have the instruments of His Sacred Passion preserved, such as the Sepulchre, the Cross, the Nails, the Crown of Thorns? For what other reason, but that we should have a vivid representation of His sufferings, and our hearts might be moved to tender compassion? When the waters of the river Jordan were miraculously divided to afford a passage for the children of Israel, twelve stones were taken out of the river to be put up as a monument and memorial

of the miracle, and twelve others were placed in the midst of the river. The children of Israel were not content with setting up one stone, but set up *twelve* stones, according to the number of tribes, so as to have a more *vivid* remembrance of the miraculous passage. "Therefore were these stones set for a monument of the children of Israel forever." In a similar way, our Saviour would preserve *all* the instruments of His Sacred Passion, not only the Cross and the Sepulchre, but also the Pillar, the Crown of Thorns, the Nails, etc., so as to have them for witnesses of all the different scenes of His bloody sacrifice.

2. These witnesses of His Passion, however, almost disappear when compared with the standing memorial of His Sacred Passion and Death, the Holy Sacrifice of Mass. St. Thomas Aq. calls this tremendous sacrifice the greatest and most splendid of all miracles God ever wrought. St. Augustin says: "Though Almighty, He was unable to give *more*; though All-wise, He knew nothing *better* to give; though infinitely rich, He had nothing to give more *precious*." Now, for what purpose has He performed such a grand work? Ask himself. "Do this for a commemoration of me." Lk. xxii, 19. Who could, then, doubt that the meditation of His Sacred Passion confers upon Jesus the greatest honor, and affords Him the greatest delight?

St. Francis of Assisium knew, by divine inspiration, that the meditation on the Sacred Passion was the devotion most acceptable to our Lord. He, therefore, devoted his whole life to this devotion, thus increasing the divine love, that consumed his heart, to the height and perfection of a Seraph.

3. Though the divine sacrifice is the most miraculous work of our Saviour, yet it is not to last forever, but only to the consummation of the world. He, therefore, erected another monument of His Sacred Passion, to last for all eternity, by retaining the marks of His precious wounds. It is true, these five wounds intercede for us, pleading with the Father for mercy and forgiveness. But after the consummation shall have come, there will be neither sins, nor sinners in need of His intercession, whilst the glorious wounds of our Saviour will continue to shine forever,

brighter than the sun, apparently for no other purpose than to represent to the eyes of God and His Blessed the Sacred Passion of the Lamb that was slain. Hence it follows that its remembrance gives to God the greatest glory.

4. Devotions will be the more salutary and beneficial to us, the more acceptable they are to God. Which are, then, the advantages derived from the frequent meditation of the Sacred Passion? In the first place, we gain the victory over our passions. "Christ having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought." I Pet. iv, 1. St. Augustin assures us that, whenever he was tempted by the devil of impurity, he resisted him successfully by meditating on the wounds of Jesus. Secondly, we have good reason to hope for a happy death. St. Gregory the Great remarks: "Be ye compassionate with our Saviour, the Lord Jesus. Have your heart occupied with the remembrance of His Sacred Passion and wounds, and be assured that you will once be a partaker of His consolations."

II. IT IS AN EASY PRACTICE, TO MEDITATE ON THE SACRED PASSION.

1. Every morning, before you begin your daily work, reflect on some scene of the Sacred Passion, on the agony in the garden of olives, on the cruel scourging, the painful crowning with thorns, or the crucifixion. After having finished this short meditation with attention and devotion, make the firm resolution to repeat it from time to time during the day, and, particularly, in temptations. It is not necessary to make this meditation in kneeling, nor to employ much time in it; you may make it when dressing, or on the way to your daily work. The principal point is, that you should reflect on it with close attention, and recall it to your mind from time to time during the day.

When you are tempted to get angry, cast your eyes on your suffering Saviour, and you will learn from Him to be meek. When you are troubled with impure thoughts and imaginations, turn the eyes of your soul at once to the Sacred Passion, saying with St. Bernard: "My God is hanging on the Cross; and I should indulge in lust!"

The artist, when taking a copy, will look at the original almost without interruption. If we are desirous of copying the great pattern placed before us, of "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ," we must look at Him in His life and death.

2. Father Peter Faber, being asked by a wealthy man to give him a good advice, how to remain in the grace of God, he counselled him to say often to himself: "Christ in extreme poverty, and I in wealth; Christ hungry and thirsty, and I enjoying all kinds of luxuries; Christ naked, and I clothed in rich garments: Christ in pain, and I in joy and pleasures." The frequent repetition of these words induced him to live thereafter in retirement and penance. Oh! that those given to pride and vanity, those indulging in impure passions, the intemperate, the wrathful, would frequently remember the Son of God in His agony and humiliation!

*Peroration:* If you endeavor to follow this devout practice, you will soon find a great delight in it. God himself, to whom this devotion is so acceptable, will remove all difficulties out of the way of your salvation. Blessed Clara of Montefalco found such great sweetness in the meditation of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, as to make it the continual object of her conversation. You devote so many of your thoughts to worldly affairs: would you not every morning devote *one* thought to God, by meditating on the Sacred Passion of His beloved Son? Would you not take refuge in His sacred wounds, as St. Augustin, who said: "In all tribulations I have found no more efficacious remedy, than the wounds of our divine Saviour: in them I rest in safety; in them I repose without fear."

John B. Campadelli.

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## II.

## THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE A CRUSADE.

The world invites to feasts of revelry and dissipation, showing the cup of lust brimful. The Church invites her children to earnest meditation, showing her Lord's cup of sorrow. Christ himself invites us to a solemn pilgrimage. "Behold, we go up

to Jerusalem." Yes, dearly beloved brethren, we go—go up to Sion, by the side of the Lord, the cross being our standard; for "if any man will come after me"—into my glory—"let him take up his cross daily and follow me." Lk. ix, 23. Oh, be convinced of the truth, the duty and importance of our crusade! May a holy enthusiasm animate you for this warfare, as our Christian forefathers were animated for the historical crusades!

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE IS A CRUSADE.

As Urban II. preached the cross to his cotemporaries at Clermont, (1095) so Reason and Religion preach the above truth.

1. Life is a pilgrimage. Man, while on earth, is

*a.* A *stranger*. "Every one is to be considered a guest on earth, nay in his own house; for if he were no guest, he would not leave again, but stay." St. Aug.

*b.* A *pilgrim*. Time, like a stream, carries him on irresistibly towards his last end, eternity. Though he may not believe it, he is ever moving on, without halt or rest. Truly, "here we have no permanent city, but we seek one to come." Heb. xiii, 14.

*c.* He has to follow the path assigned for him. Christ, his church, and our conscience, show the way. No deviation is allowed. We must renew the promise of Israel to the King of Edom: "We will go by the highway, neither turning aside to the right hand, nor to the left." Numb. xx, 17.

*d.* He is journeying to his last and only end. Therefore no pleasure trip. Keep the last end before your eyes, like St. Paul; for, before the approach of death, you will not attain it. "Brethren, I do not count myself of having apprehended. But one thing I do: forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before me, I pursue towards the mark, for the prize of supernatural vocation is Christ Jesus." Philip iii, 13.

2. Life compared to a race and warfare.

*a.* We run the race. Abstain, then, from all things that will hinder you. Try to excel others. "Know you not that they

who ran in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain." I Cor. ix, 24.

*b.* We fight battles. The crusaders also had to fight many battles before entering the Holy City. So have we to engage in many a combat, for "the kingdom of heaven suffers violence." "Brethren, be strengthened in the Lord, and in the weight of His power. * * For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers: against the rulers of the world of this darkness; against the spirits of wickedness in the high places. Wherefore, take unto you the armour of God, * * the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, * * praying at all times and watching with all instance." Eph. vi, 12 ff. Remember, you are knights fighting against God's enemies.

3. Life a true crusade.

The cross is (*a.*) Our *standard.* "And he shall set up a standard unto the nations, and shall assemble the fugitives of Israel." Is. xi, 12. Jesus, our leader, precedes, saying: "Follow me." "By patience let us run to the fight proposed unto us: looking on Jesus, who underwent the cross. * * Think diligently upon Him * * that you be not wearied, fainting in your minds." Heb. xii, 1 ff.

*b.* Our *field-badge,* engraved in our souls by baptism as warriors of Jesus Christ, a remembrance of our covenant.

*c.* Our *weapon*: "*In hoc signo vinces.*"

*d.* The *prize of our victory.* Hail us on the day of our recompense! "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven" (Mt. xxiv, 30), the joy and glory of the conqueror. "God forbid that I should glory, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal. vi, 14. Think of the overwhelming joy of the crusaders, when they beheld from a distance the Holy City, the place where the Cross was planted. What delight when we shall once enter into the celestial Sion, the end of our crusade!

II. EVERY ONE IS OBLIGED, AND ABLE, TO TAKE PART IN THIS CRUSADE.

"Punishment shall reach whosoever presumes to prevent

this holy undertaking (the crusade); our help in the name of the Lord shall smooth your path and accompany you." Thus Pope Urban. What was only a wish and exhortation from the Pope, is a command on the part of Christ.

1. Every one is obliged to take part. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross." Lk. ix, 23. "Whosoever doth not carry his cross can not be my disciple." Lk. xiv, 27. "Labour as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. For he also that striveth for the mastery is not crowned, except he strive lawfully." II Tim. ii, 3, 5. Jesus Christ exhorts every one, whatever his age or condition, to carry his cross. Which cross?

*a.* The cross of afflictions. "The world is a hospital, where there are as many afflicted as there are men." St. Aug. Who counts all the crosses which Sin has framed and still frames? Carry them--after Christ. Remember, "that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." Act. xiv, 21. "By the sadness of the countenance the mind of the offender is corrected." Eccle. vii, 4.

*b.* The cross of discipline—the earnest endeavor of overcoming your passions and sinful habits. "He that rejecteth discipline is unhappy." Wisd. iii, 11. "Embrace discipline, lest * * you perish from the just way." Ps. ii, 12. Alas! fidelity to God is a great cross, heavy and afflicting to man in his corrupt nature.

2. Every one is able to take part.

*a.* Grace is sufficient. "God is faithful. * * He will make * * that you may be able to bear it." I Cor. x, 13. No true soldier of Christ ever pleaded impossibility.

*b.* Opportunity is afforded to every one—to the married, to widows, orphans, etc. It is right, for "ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?" Now, "the servant is not greater than his lord." John xv, 20.

*c.* Every one is reminded of it in a hundred different ways. The shape of the cross occurs to you everywhere—in the flying birds, on the ship-mast carrying the sail, on the branches of the

tree. Man himself with his expanded arms is like a large cross.

*Peroration:* Remember at all times that you are crusaders. If you only would be so, truly and wilfully, in the sight of Jesus and Heaven! Join, then, with enthusiasm in the cry of the crusaders: "God wills it, God wills it!"

Eggert.

## First Sunday of Lent.

### I.

### TEMPTATIONS AND THEIR REMEDIES.

Hardly credible, if the Gospel did not attest it. Jesus, the substantial Holiness, by nature incapable of sin, struggling with the tempter! Our astonishment will soon cease, however, if we reflect, with St. Augustin, that Jesus submitted to the temptation of the devil, in order to prevent us from being overcome by temptation. Temptation, therefore, is no evil: or, else, how could Jesus and His Saints have been reached by it? But it is an evil, and the greatest of evils, to yield to temptation. Let us then learn how to resist the attacks of our enemy, and for this purpose examine

I. THE VARIOUS TEMPTATIONS TO WHICH MAN IS MOST EXPOSED.

1. Temptations are general. They come

*a.* Upon every one of every sex, age, and condition of life. Every one ought to complain: "I was conceived in iniquities." Ps. l, 7. Wherefore, "the imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth." Gen. viii, 21. Every one sees "another law in his members, fighting against the law of his mind, and captivating him in the law of sin; that is, in his members" (Rom. vii, 23), and "every man is tempted, being drawn away by his own concupiscence, and allured." James i, 14. Temptations find access

*b.* To every place. No place is secure against them—not Paradise, not the wilderness where Jesus was fasting and praying. Temptations may come

*c.* At all times: "for the life of man upon earth is a warfare." Job i, 7. Our enemy is not discouraged by any defeat; He is forever busy forming new plans, laying new snares.

2. What is God's object in suffering men to be tempted? He intends to

*a.* Humble us. Temptations, being so abominable and so

frequent, open our eyes to our own misery. "And lest the greatness of revelations should puff me up, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me." II Cor. xii. 7.

*b.* He shows us the need of prayer. Necessity teaches prayer. "For which thing I thrice besought the Lord, that it might depart from me." L. c. 8.

*c.* He intends to try and purify our souls. It is in battle that the soldier's courage and strength are tried; it is by winds and tempests that trees strike deeper roots. "Power is made perfect in infirmity" (l. c. 9), *i. e.*, by temptation.

*d.* He intends to give us an opportunity for obtaining merits. "For he that striveth for the mastery, is not crowned, except he strive lawfully." II Tim. ii, 5.

Let it, then, be your consolation that virtue does not consist in being exempt from temptations, but in overcoming them.

3. Different kinds of temptation. "All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life." I John ii, 16.

*a.* Concupiscence of the flesh. When Jesus was hungry, the tempter coming, said to him: "Command that these stones be made bread." This kind of temptation is most to be feared, (1) by reason of our nature being sensual and corrupt, and, therefore, liable to be attacked by the devil, who knows our frailty. Moreover (2), history teaches us that temptations of this kind have proved the most fatal. Call to mind the loss of Paradise, the deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha and of other cities, the fall of David and Solomon, the miseries of many in our days—all the result of temptations of the flesh.

*b.* Inordinate ambition, or pride of life. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down." You are ambitious if you are convinced of your own importance, pride yourself on your dignity and honors, neglect your duties, because your state of life is not high enough for you, etc. How many good works are without merit and true value in consequence of this dangerous passion!

*c.* Concupiscence of the eyes, or covetousness. "All these will I give thee." It is a universal temptation, and the root of many vices. For money, virtue is sold. "Covetousness is the root of all evil" (I Tim. vi, 10), and almost incurable. "Covetousness is the service of idols." Col. iii, 5.

II. MEANS OF OVERCOMING TEMPTATION.

Jesus assigns two means we ought to make use of. "Watch ye and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Mtt. xxvi, 41.

1. "Watch ye," *i. e.*, prepare yourselves to meet temptation

*a.* By wholesome fear, equally distant from discouragement as well as from presumption. We have to fear, because the struggle is a spiritual one; great things are at stake, and we are feeble.

*b.* By courage. "Brethren, be strengthened in the Lord, and in the might of His power." Eph. vi, 10. God is our invincible helper: "If God be for us, who is against us?" Rom. viii, 31.

*c.* By shunning the dangers and occasions of sin. Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God."

2. "Pray"

*a.* With fervour and confidence. "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me." Ps. cxx, 1. "He will overshadow thee with His shoulders, and under His wings thou shalt trust."

*b.* Pray before, and during temptation, and also after temptation, to give thanks.

*c.* Especially remember the presence of God. "Walk before me and be perfect." Gen. xvii, 1. "Remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin." Ecclies. vii, 40. Make acts of the virtues opposed to the vices to which you are tempted, viz.: make an act of faith when you are tempted against faith; make an act of charity to overcome the habit of cursing, etc.

*Peroration:* Since the Son of God suffered himself to be

tempted by the devil, you cannot doubt the importance of knowing the means with which to meet and overcome temptation. You know the weapons recommended by Jesus, not only by words, but by His own example. Make use of them, and the angels will come and invisibly minister to you after every temptation, and angels will come and visibly minister to you after your last struggle, and lead you into the arms of the ever-blessed Trinity. Amen.

Billot.

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## II.

## CHRISTIAN LIFE DURING LENT.

At the opening of this sacred season the Church, in to-day's gospel, represents to us Jesus, the God of Holiness, in deep retirement from the world, chastising His virginal flesh by wearisome mortifications, and at last submitting to and overcoming the temptation of Satan, that we might have in Him the model of a truly Christian life for this ensuing time of penance. "Look, and make it according to the pattern that was shown thee in the mount." Ex. xxv, 40. Which, then, are during Lent the requirements of a truly Christian life?

### PART I.

### LET YOUR LIFE BE INNOCENT, I. E., AVOID SIN.

Innocence of life consists, partly,

I. In abstaining from forbidden food.

1. This abstinence was commanded in the state of innocence in Paradise as a condition of preserving that state. "The happiness of Paradise could not be preserved without abstinence from food." St. Jerome.

2. It is required in the state of sin for the purpose of restoring the first happy state; for, according to Tertullian's doctrine, God has enjoined on us the obligation of fasting, in order that innocence, lost by gluttony, might be restored by fasting." Innocence consists,

II. Especially in abstaining from sin. "Fasting is of no avail, unless the soul abstain from injustice." St. Leo. To abstain from sin is more necessary in Lent

1. For the perfection of our fasting, which, without abstaining from sin, would be a form without the substance, a body without soul, a lifeless corpse. We infer this

*a.* From Holy Scripture. "Why have we fasted, and thou hast not regarded: have we humbled our souls, and thou hast not taken notice? Behold, in the day of your fast your own will is found, and you exact of your debtors." Is. lviii, 3 ff. "Do not fast, as you have done until this day." V. 4.

*b.* From the doctrine of the Fathers: "A true fast is to abstain from sin." St. Basil.

*c.* From the ceremony of distributing the blessed ashes, by which the Church inculcates repentance for past sins, and the abstinence from new ones.

2. From the nature of man.

*a.* Consisting of body and soul, he must abstain from forbidden fruit, not only of the body, but of the soul also, *i. e.*, from sin. "Is not this rather the fast I have chosen? Loose the bonds of wickedness," etc. Is. lviii, 6. "Those who abstain from food, but at the same time commit sin, imitate the devils, who do not eat, but do not renounce their wickedness either." St. Isidor Sevill.

*b.* He must chastise the soul too, as taking part in the sins of the body.

3. From the precept of the Easter communion, for which we must prepare not only by the fasting of the body, but also of the soul.

PART II.

LET YOUR LIFE BE SEVERE AND MORTIFIED, BY ABSTAINING FROM ALL AMUSEMENTS AND PLEASURES OF THE FLESH.

I. Imitate Christ's mortified, penitent and crucified life, "that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh." II Cor. iv, 11. "He sanctified his baptism by fasting." Tertull.

II. Imitate the example of the ancient Christians, who were so severe in observing the regulations of Lent, in order that they might deprive their bodies of whatever might tend to nour-

## Second Sunday of Lent.

### I.

### THE HOUSE OF OUR ETERNITY.

It is not astonishing that Peter should have desired to build three tabernacles, and to remain in the place where, absorbed in the vision of the transfigured Son of God, happy in the society of Saints, he forgot all earthly affairs. With us the case is often reversed. We, attached to earthly things, are very prone to forget the vision of God and the company of the angels and Saints. It is on account of this dangerous inclination, that the indifferent Christian, the covetous business man, the bold sinner, ought to be aroused by a solemn word about eternity. The Holy Ghost once spoke the grave sentence: "Man shall go into the house of his eternity." Eccle. xii, 5. These words may be the subject of our meditation.

I. "MAN SHALL GO."

1. He shall *go*. Figure of earthly uncertainty. There is

*a*. No stand-still. Time passes by, minute after minute; graces, once neglected, never return.

*b*. No going back. You cannot begin anew the lost years, nor restore the forfeited innocence: you cannot undo the past.

2. He shall *go quickly*. "He cometh forth like a flower, and is destroyed, and fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth in the same state." Job xiv, 2.

*a*. Short are his days—even the oldest age—compared to eternity. Hence, joys and afflictions are short also. "The number of the days of men at the most are a hundred years; as a drop of water of the sea are they esteemed: and as a pebble of the sand, so are a few years compared to eternity." Eccles. xviii, 8, Cf. Wisd. v, 8-13.

*b*. His end is near, but uncertain. "For what is your life? It is a vapour which appeareth for a little while, and afterwards shall vanish away." James iv, 15. "Boast not for to-morrow." Prov. xxvii, 1.

3. He *shall go away.* "If he goes away, he is but a visitor." St. Aug.

*a.* He will leave the world. "For here we have no permanent city; but we seek one to come." Heb. xiii, 14.

*b.* The world will leave him. Youth, strength, health, enjoyments, goods and friends will vanish. "Love not the world * * the world passeth away." I John ii, 15-17.

II. "INTO THE HOUSE."

1. His earthly dwelling, be it a cottage or a palace, is not his own. Sometimes he received it from some other visitor, and it will be again taken from him—together with all his property—at some time in his life, surely after his death; therefore, it is not his property.

2. His body will receive as its only property a little house of boards, which, moreover, it has to share with the worms, whose food it will become. "Their sepulchres shall be their houses forever." Ps. xlviii, 12.

3. The soul will have a house of her own indeed,

*a.* Proportioned to her. St. John saw an angel who had a golden reed to measure the celestial City of Jerusalem. And he measured "the measure of a man" (Apoc. xxi, 15-17); for man's own works give the measure of his eternal house. "For with what judgment you have judged, you shall be judged." Mtt. vii, 2.

*b.* Prepared *for her.* "In my Father's house there are many mansions. * * I go to prepare a place for you." John xiv, 2. But the everlasting fire is likewise "*prepared* for the devil and his angels." Mtt. xxv, 41.

It was in consideration of this truth that, according to St. Chrysostom, the Gentiles reproached the bad Christians, saying: "Either they are liars, not believing what they pretend to believe, or they are fools, who believe, and yet dare to lead such bad lives."

III. "OF HIS ETERNITY."

That is truly his house. This everlasting possession has

1. A beginning that coincides with the close of our earthly existence. This beginning will come after the end of earth's passing joys and afflictions, and then the state of the soul for the next world will be decided. "If the tree fall to the south or to the north, in what place soever it shall fall, there shall it be." Eccle. xi, 3. It will fall on that side to which it is leaning. To which side do you lean? This possession will have

2. No end.

Compare heaven, *i. e.*, unspeakable, everlasting happiness, with the fleeting, miserable joys of earth. What loss! Hell—*vice versa.*

Thomas More said to his wife, when she, to save his life, tried to persuade him to yield to the wishes of the king: "How many years do you suppose I may yet live? She answered: "Perhaps, twenty years." The martyr replied: "Oh! foolish woman, you wish I should lose a happy eternity for twenty miserable years, and condemn myself to the everlasting torments of hell!"

*Peroration:* God put it in our hands whether we shall be forever happy or unhappy. "Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death." Jerem. xxi, 8. Never forget the words: "Man shall go into the house of his eternity," and take a delight in meditating on the article: "I believe in life everlasting." Bordoni.

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## II.

## VIRTUE AND VICE—THEIR HARDSHIPS AND JOYS COMPARED.

"It is good for us to be here," was Peter's exclamation at the sight of his transfigured Master. Would, we could once say the same, on seeing Jesus in His glory above! We shall be rewarded with this eternal happiness, if we but walk the path of vir-

tue, far from the path of vice. But we love vice because we believe it to be sweet and pleasant, and free from trouble and annoyance, and we shrink from the practice of virtue because we consider it disagreeable and difficult. How much we are mistaken in this regard, we may easily see, by comparing with attention the respective hardships and joys of virtue and vice.

## PART I.

### HARDSHIPS OF VIRTUE AND OF VICE.

The hardships connected with a virtuous life are less than those connected with a wicked life:

I. In themselves.

1. The former consist

*a.* In subduing the passions, which, when indulged in, torment us the more.

*b.* In abstaining from desires which, even if complied with, never yield true satisfaction, and finally leave only bitterness.

*c.* In observing a law given by an all-wise and most bountiful God: "My yoke is sweet, and my burden light." Mt. xi, 30.

2. The latter are

*a.* The cruel tyranny which the passions exercise over their slaves. Think of hatred, pride, avarice, envy, lust, ambition, etc.

*b.* The tortures of an evil conscience. The wicked will confess on the day of judgment: "We wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through hard ways." Wisd. v, 7.

II. Again, the hardships of a virtuous life are light, when considered in their circumstances.

1. They are mitigated

*a.* By faith in God, who is moved by love to chastise His children.

*b.* By the hope of a reward in the next world.

*c.* By the example of those Christian heroes who have preceded us, and who now shine in eternal glory.

*d.* By the well-founded hope in the help and grace of God.

2. The miseries of a life of vice press more heavily on the sinner as he advances in years; his disgust at the hollowness of sinful pleasures grows from day to day; his mind is more and more dejected, because his conversion becomes more and more difficult; the fear of God's judgment increases the more he approaches the gates of eternity.

PART II.

JOYS OF A VIRTUOUS AND OF A VICIOUS LIFE.

I. The joys of a virtuous life are

1. True joys, inward consolations, peace of conscience, familiar conversation with our dearest Lord and God by prayer, reception of the Sacraments, etc.

2. Lasting joys. Nobody can deprive the just of them without his consent; they will remain with him as long as he walks the path of virtue. And with his death they become perfect; for the words of Jesus will be fulfilled in him: "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you." John xvi, 22.

II. The joys of a wicked life are

1. False and vain. They will never satisfy the human heart. "I have seen all things that are done under the sun: and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccle. i. 14.

2. Inconstant, as they depend on the caprice of man—on external circumstances.

3. Transient and short. How soon is disgust and weariness felt, even should they last the span of human life!

4. Terrible at last. "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell." Job xxi, 13.

*Peroration:* Let us, then, leave the weary path of vice, which leads to ruin, and walk on the delightful path of virtue, which leads to eternal, unspeakable joys.

Schneller.

## Third Sunday of Lent.

### I.

### WHY SOME CHRISTIANS ARE MUTE IN THE CONFESSIONAL.

The poor wretch, whose tongue was tied by the power of Satan represents those Christians—those sinners who are silent before the secret tribunal of confession, when they should speak sincerely. It is just in this place of divine grace and mercy where so many sinners are dumb for years—to their own spiritual ruin. As the Church calls on you to make your Easter confession, I deem it proper to warn you against this fatal silence. What, then, is the reason that so many do not "speak right" before the tribunal of divine mercy?

I. SOME ARE NOT ABLE TO SPEAK BECAUSE THEY DO NOT KNOW THE STATE OF THEIR CONSCIENCE:

1. Either through *carelessness* in examining their conscience. If you do not know your sins, you cannot confess them. To examine our conscience well we are in need

*a.* Of heavenly light, for which we invoke the Holy Ghost: As the woman of the Gospel, who lost one groat, lighted a candle, so we need the light of God in order to examine the most secret recesses of our souls. Lk. xv, 8.

*b.* Of proper diligence, as we use it in any other important matter. "The woman sweeps the house, and seeks diligently." If you knew that a *thief* or *murderer* had slipped into your house, could your mind rest easy before you had searched every corner? "Son of man, dig in the wall" of thy conscience—down to the very bottom of thy soul—"go in, and see the wicked abominations * * every form of creeping things, and of living creatures, the abomination, and all the idols of the house of Israel were painted on the wall all round about." Ezech. viii, 8-10.

2. Or, through *false self-love*, which causes them to look upon great sins as mere trifles—hence no confession of them.

*a.* It is this self-love that blinds us so as not to see our sins,

or at least to excuse them. David's anger was exceedingly kindled against the man of whom Nathan, the Prophet, had spoken to him, and yet it had been one whole year that he had not known of his being the very same man. II Kings xii, 1 ff.

*b.* It is this self-love that often renders confession invalid and sacrilegious—for want of a sincere and complete confession. If your confessor were a Nathan, you might often hear him say: "Thou art the man."

II. SOME OF THEM ARE NOT WILLING TO SPEAK IN THE CONFESSIONAL.

What is it that paralyzes the tongue of the sinner, and prevents him from confessing the sins known to him?

1. Either *false shame.*

*a.* It is caused partly by our nature which, for its self-love and pride, abhors confession. Be not ashamed to confess thy sins; "there is a shame that bringeth sin." Eccle. iv, 25-31.

*b.* It is caused partly by our adversary, who, taking advantage of our frailty in this regard, returns to the sinner the feeling of shame of which he had deprived him before his fall. Thus by his promise that they should be as gods, he deprived our first parents of the fear of God and of His vengeance; and, after they had committed sin, he returned the fear, so that they hid themselves from the face of the Lord God.

2. The preservatives against it are the following considerations:

*a.* It is only the commission, not the confession, of sin that dishonors you. "Be not ashamed to confess secretly to one person what you were not ashamed to commit publicly before others or with others." St. Aug.

*b.* It is easier to suffer confusion before one man than before all men—before the whole world on the day of the revelation of consciences. It is in vain to say: "Nobody seeth us," as the tempters said to Susanna (Dan. xiii, 20), for God sees you, and "what you did in secret He will reveal in the sight of all nations, and in the sight of the sun." II Kings, xii, 12. It is

thus that He threatened David. "Behold, I come against thee, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will shew thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to the kingdoms." Nehem. iii, 5.

*c.* God's vicar in the confessional is a feeble man himself, a sinner, bound to perpetual silence, to mercy and love towards the penitent.

*d.* The humiliation of confession is deserved. Every sin is pride, rebellion; pride must be humbled, and humbled it is by confession—a bitter, but wholesome medicine.

3. Or, *attachment to sin.*

*a.* Many are neither earnestly desirous nor courageous enough to become converted, though it is the necessary condition of a valid absolution. It is too difficult for them to give up certain acquaintances, to be reconciled to their enemies, to make restitution to their injured fellow-men, to be rid of a bad habit, etc.

*b.* Yet they want to appear as good Christians before their families, congregations, etc., and to make their Easter communion.

*c.* Therefore, they conceal their hideous sins in the confessional, thus deceiving their confessors, and mostly themselves, but not God, who, through a just punishment, often suffers them to be dumb to the end, even on their death-beds.

"His bones shall be filled with the vices of his youth; and they shall sleep with him in the dust. For when evil shall be sweet in his mouth, he will hide it under his tongue. He will spare it, and not leave it, and will hide it in his throat." Job xx, 11–13.

To no purpose! God will call the dumb sinner to a severe account, and "he will be silent." Mt. xxii, 12.

*Peroration:* Vomit forth, then, the poison of sin (Origen): be not deterred by carelessness or self-love, shame or attachment to sin. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to clean us from all iniquity." I John i, 9.

Abbot Roeggl.

## II.
## ON THE SIN OF BLASPHEMY.

"Some of them said: "He casteth out devils in Beelzebub, the prince of devils." Lk. xi, 15. It is thus that the Jews blasphemed the God-man. Alas! There are Christians, too, who, though being enlightened with the light of faith, blaspheme Him, blaspheme His Holy Church, blaspheme His Sacraments and means of Grace. It is against allowing yourselves to be ensnared by Satan into this evil use of your speech that I wish to caution you.

### PART I.

### BLASPHEMY IS A HEINOUS CRIME.

He that blasphemes God attacks directly His majesty. To him the words apply: "He hath run against Him with his neck raised up, and is armed with a fat neck." Job xv, 26. Therefore it is

I. *An insult against the infinite majesty of God*, the heinousness of which we may partly understand by calling to mind:

1. Who is he that blasphemes? Man, a worm of the earth, formed of dust, destined to return to dust, not able to do anything by his own power, a sinner.

2. Who is blasphemed? God, the "King of ages." I Tim. i, 17. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hands, and weighed the heavens with His palm? Who hath poised with three fingers the bulk of the earth, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?" Is. xl, 12. At whose throne countless myriads of angels incessantly cry out: "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of hosts; all the earth is full of His glory," l. c. vi, 3, "who can destroy both soul and body in hell." Mt. x, 28.

"Why, do you not fear that fire may fall from heaven and devour you?" St. Ephrem. "The devils, hearing the name of Jesus, tremble, and we fear not to insult the same name." St. Greg.

II. *A shocking ingratitude.* What do you owe

1. As human beings to God the Father? Your existence, your dignity, the preservation of your life, innumerable benefits of body and soul.

2. As Christians to God the Son? Redemption, a participation in the treasures of His grace in His Holy Church, the right to heaven.

3. To the Holy Ghost? Your sanctification, innumerable graces, by which He protected you against misfortune, sin and eternal condemnation. And as a recompense you blaspheme the Triune God!

"If my enemy had reviled me, I would verily have borne with it. * * But thou, a man of one mind, my guide and my familiar!" Ps. liv, 13, 14.

"O, devilish tongue! what is it that incites thee to blaspheme God, who redeemed thee with His blood?" St. Bernardin.

III. A *great sin of scandal*, as people commonly blaspheme in the presence of others. St. Paul reproaches the Jews, because "the name of God through them was blasphemed among the Gentiles." (Rom. ii, 24). Are not those Christians who, with their blasphemous tongues, incite their fellow-men to an imitation of their bad example, far more guilty? Yet this scandal is of daily occurrence. "My name is continually blasphemed all the day long." Is. ii, 5.

IV. It is the proper sin of the damned. "All other sins seem to proceed partly from human frailty, partly from ignorance, but the sin of blasphemy originates in malice." St. Bernardin. Or what advantage or delight is there in blasphemy? It is the daily occupation of the damned, the language of hell. "They blasphemed the God of Heavens, * * * and did not penance for their work." Apoc. xvi, 11.

PART II.

BLASPHEMY IS SEVERELY PUNISHED:

I. *On earth*,

1. In former times by the secular authorities. Under the Emperor Justinian, blasphemers were sentenced to death.

St. Louis, King of France, commanded the tongue of the blasphemer to be pierced, and his forehead to be branded with a red-hot iron, and if he repeated his blasphemy, he was sentenced to death. Gregory IV deprived the blasphemers of Christian burial.

2. By God Himself. In the Old Covenant it was commanded: "He that blasphemes the name of the Lord, dying let him die; all the multitude shall stone him, whether he be a native or a stranger." Leviticus, xxiv, 16. Because Rabsaces blasphemed God, an angel of the Lord came and slew in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000 men. IV Kings xix, 35.

A blasphemer in Mexico, being reproached for his wicked habit, replied that he would speak worse yet. The following night his tongue clung to his palate and he died a miserable death. One Simon of Tournay, after uttering a blaspnemy, fell on the ground and expired, yelling like a dog.

II. In the next world. "They shall be cursed that shall despise Thee, and they shall be condemned that shall blaspheme Thee." Tob xiii, 16. "Thy own mouth shall condemn thee, and not I; and thy own lips shall answer thee." Job, xv, 6.

*Peroration:* I conjure you, then, by the salvation of your souls, abstain from blaspheming God. Do not suffer the name of God to be blasphemed under your roof. Parents, suffer not your children to blaspheme their true Father.

St. Alph. Liguori.

of St. Joseph. St. Joseph was not solely the foster-father of the Saviour and the spouse of the Blessed Virgin; he was also their supporter and protector. He was chosen by the Lord, to earn, by his toils and labors, the daily bread for His only begotten Son and His holy mother.

How great must have been the holiness of him who was intrusted with this exalted mission? If the Lord sanctified John the Baptist in his mother's womb, because he was to prepare His way; if virtue was going out from the Son of God (Lk viii, 46), what holiness must have been imparted to him who lived with Jesus and for Jesus those many years! How exuberant must have been the blessings heaped on him whom the Lord had made "master of His house and ruler of all His possessions?"

2. The sanctity by which the grandeur of a Saint is to be measured, consists in his conformity with the will of God. The more strenuous his efforts to subject his will to the will of God, the more he is entitled to be called a child of God, resembling the only begotten of the Father who said: "Father, not My will, but Thine be done." Lk. xxii, 42.

The will of St. Joseph was so much in conformity with the divine will, that the infinite God of heaven and earth, being made visible in human form, followed it as the guide of His own conduct. The greatest and most sacred power on earth is the father's power over his child. Joseph was possessed of the fullness of paternal power over the only begotten Son of God. The eternal Father Who said to His Son: "From the womb before the day-star I begot Thee" (Ps. cix, 3), transferred His rights to St. Joseph, who, therefore, commanded the Son of God as if he were his father. "Thy father and I, said the Blessed Virgin, have sought Thee sorrowing," Lk. ii, 48.

Joshua commanded the sun to stand still in his course; Joseph commanded not only the sun of the firmament, but Him Who has created the sun and the starry hosts. We consider it the highest degree of blessedness to be allowed, hereafter, to follow the Lamb of God; as for Joseph, the Lamb of God followed him.

II. THE GRANDEUR OF HIS VIRTUES.

St. Joseph is great not only for his sublime vocation, but also for his virtues, by which he proved himself worthy of his vocation.

1. Of the virtues most conspicuous in St. Joseph, it is above all his *singleness of heart* which constitutes his most characteristic feature. God had intrusted him with the greatest mysteries of heaven. St. Joseph, instead of scrutinizing them, devotes his whole life and time to the care of his chaste spouse and her only-begotten Son. He feels happy in rendering to his Lord and God the smallest services. That we might be like him! This singleness of heart is the highest degree of humility, and the perfection of genuine sanctity. Let us be content with our vocation and the position in life assigned to us by the Lord. If men would not burn with desire for something greater than their position in life, instead of faithfully complying with the duties of the state of life where our Lord has placed them, human society would not be agitated by murmurings of dissatisfaction and revolutionary tendencies, which appear to be the public disease of our times.

2. Moreover, call to your mind the profound and immovable *confidence* by which St. Joseph distinguished himself. When the angel said to him: "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," (Mat. i, 20), he was full of confidence, though he understood not the divine mystesy; and when he was commanded to flee into Egypt with the child whom he believed to be the king of the universe, he did not one moment hesitate in his confidence in the Lord. He returned to Nazareth with the child and his mother. He sees the child growing up before his eyes, being like other children of men, subject to the wants and necessities of human nature; and Joseph does still trust in the Lord. In a like manner the ways of our life are often obscure and intricate. Let us not loose confidence in our Lord and God; the time will come when His wise intentions will be laid open before our eyes.

3. It is impossible to speak of St. Joseph's peculia

virtues, without mentioning their crown and perfection, his *virginity* and *angelic purity*, the symbol of which you behold in his hand, the pure and spotless lily. Only one flame was burning in the heart of this great Saint: the pure flame of love for Jesus, his Lord and Redeemer, and for the Blessed Virgin who had borne him. Was it not necessary that St. Joseph should shine with a similar purity as Jesus and Mary, since he was deemed worthy of living in the closest proximity with the greatest purity and sanctity; and since he was chosen to be the foster-father of the Most Holy, and spouse of the purest Virgin? "It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him a help like unto himself," said God when He was about to create Eve. When God chose Joseph to be a help to the purest Virgin and the foster-father of His own Son made man, was it not necessary that he should be a help quite similar to mother and child in purity and sanctity? "God gave Adam a wife quite like unto him," says St. Peter Damian, "in like manner he gave to the Blessed Virgin a spouse, who was spiritually quite like unto her."

His sanctity continually increased from his being in the society of Jesus and Mary. Two cherubim spread their wings over the Ark of the Covenant. "He made two cherubim of beaten gold, which he set on the two sides of the propitiatory, spreading their wings and covering the propitiatory, and looking one towards the other and towards the propitiatory." Ex. xxxvii, 7, 9. In a similar way Mary and Joseph, like two cherubim, guard the propitiatory of our Saviour, the life of the only-begotten Son of God on earth, both resplendent in the gold of divine love and sanctity.

Let us incessantly strive for this angelic purity to that degree as our state of life requires. Let us invoke St. Joseph, who lived as an angel in the flesh, to teach and obtain for us this crown and pearl of virtues.

*Peroration:* Remember, we are called upon to be members of the same holy family, as the head of which we admire St. Joseph. If, as the Redeemed of Jesus Christ, we are His brethren, brethren of the only-begotten Son of God, and if we

invoke the Blessed Virgin as our mother, St. Joseph is with the same reason our father. That he might be forever our holy, gracious, and powerful father! We will imitate his virtues; we will obey him as Christ obeyed him, and he will carry us through this tempestuous life, as he carried on his arms Him, who, as our God and Lord be praised for evermore.

Joseph Ehrler.

## Feast of the Annunciation.

### MARY, MOTHER OF GOD; VIRGIN; MOTHER AND VIRGIN.

Four thousand years the nations had longed for the coming of the Saviour. On this day their desire was to be fulfilled. The Archangel descended from heaven as the messenger of the good tidings, that Mary was chosen the Mother of God. "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son. * * He shall be called the Son of the Most High." On receiving this message, Mary asks for an explanation, how she can become a mother, she being resolved to remain a virgin. "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" Gabriel gives the required explanation, saying: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee;" thus assuring her that she shall be mother, and yet remain a virgin. You see then clearly that the mystery of the Annunciation calls upon us to behold with holy awe and admiration Mary as Mother of God, as virgin, and as mother and virgin.

#### I. MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD.

1. The Blessed Virgin Mary is Mother of God. The council of Ephesus, as well as the Lateran council held under Pope Martin I, exclude from the church of Christ whoever be wicked enough to deny Mary to be the Mother of God. No one denies that human mothers are the true mothers of men, though the souls of their children do not originate from the maternal substance. For the same reason Mary is the true Mother of God, though the divinity of her Son did not originate from her substance. The Son whom she has borne is God, consequently she is the Mother of God.

2. On this day Mary was elevated to this sublime dignity. In consequence of her word: "Fiat, be it done," the union of the divine and human natures, the greatest and most incomprehensible mystery, was performed in her womb. "O powerful,

O efficacious word! (Fiat) O word never sufficiently venerated!" St. Thom. Aqu. "The faithful Virgin had scarce opened her mouth to give her consent, when through the gates of faith the Holy Ghost entered the temple of the virginial womb, to elevate Mary to the dignity of Mother of God." Ruperturs Abbas.

3. It is the highest dignity.

*a.* For, to be the Mother of God is the dignity which is nearest to being God Himself. Next to God the Mother of God is the most exalted of all beings. In consequence of her "Fiat," she approaches the nearest to God, the almighty Creator, and becomes the beginning of the Beginning, so as to be allowed to address the Son of the Father in the words once spoken by the Father: "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." Mt. xvii, 5.

*b.* This dignity comprises all greatness and glory which can be proclaimed of the Blessed Virgin. "To be the purest virgin and the queen of angels confers on Mary the greatest honor; but all these titles are surpassed by the one prerogative of being the Mother of God." St. Bernard. Therefore the holy Evangelists eulogize the Blessed Virgin in these few words: "Of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ." Mt. i, 16.

*c.* It surpasses every other dignity, all prerogatives, all that is created. "All the angels and Saints, however exalted their dignity may be, are no more than servants of God; but Mary being the Mother of God, infinitely exceeds all the angels and men in magnificence." St. Augustin. "Mary is so great that God Himself was not able to make her greater. God was able to make a greater world; God was able to make a greater heaven; but he was not able to make a greater mother than the Mother of God." St. Bonaventura. "Mary enjoys a prerogative, being infinite in its kind." St. Thom. Aq. Mary herself is astounded over this dignity. "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed." Lk. i, 48.

II. MARY THE INVIOLATE VIRGIN.

1. Mary was virgin in virtue of her vow. "She is the mother of all virgins, being the first who, without commandment,

without advice, and without seeing an example before her, offered to God the sacrifice of her virginity, and by her sacred vow she has taken away the disgrace hitherto connected with this state." St. Antony. She made this vow before the angel was sent to her, to whom she replied: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" Lk. i, 34. This vow was so sacred to her that she was resolved rather to remain a virgin than with the loss of her virginity to become mother of the Most High.

2. How great was the prerogative resulting therefrom!

*a.* Virginity in general transforms the earthly man into a heavenly man, elevating him to the rank of the angels. "To live in the flesh as though one were out of the flesh, is a celestial, rather than a terrestial life." St. Chrysostom. "If you, O virgins, persevere in chastity, you are like to the angels of God." St. Cyprian.

*b.* Mary is the first of all virgins, who by a vow, obliged herself to this virginal state, thus setting an example for all. She is the guide, the pattern, the glory, and the queen of all virgins.

### III. MARY IS BOTH VIRGIN AND MOTHER.

1. This greatest glory and most sublime prerogative of the Blessed Virgin was pronounced by the Archangel in these words: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." She shall conceive, though not knowing man, without any detriment to her virginity. By becoming a mother her purity shall shine with greater lustre.

2. It is a miraculous work, possible only to the Almighty; and without parallel. Adam came into this world without the aid of man or woman; Eve without the aid of woman; the rest of men came into existence by man and woman. The Son of God partook of the membership of mankind by a new, unheard of miracle.

3. It was prophesied and prefigured in the Old Testament: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." Is. vii, 14.

It was prefigured by the burning bush which was not consumed, and by the rod of Aaron, blooming against the laws of nature. And the Church, in view of the mystery of the Annuciation, admires Mary as "Virgo Singularis."

*Peroration:* Let us venerate the Blessed Virgin by imitating her innocence and purity; and if we be in sin, let us honor her by true repentance and a sincere conversion, lest she may address us in the words of the Prophet: "Depart, you that are defiled. Depart, get ye hence, touch not." Lam. iv, 15.

Laselve.

## Fourth Sunday of Lent.

### I.

### PRECEPT AND REWARD OF ALMS-GIVING.

Jesus "furnishing for the multitude a table in the wilderness" (Ps. lxxvii, 19), the Apostles distributing to them the multiplied and sanctified bread, preach to the Christians who are blessed with earthly goods the duty of charity and mercy toward their needy brethren; preach this sacred duty during Lent, the time of fasting and abstinence, so as to sanctify and ennoble the exercise of fasting by the intention of performing works of mercy. The sermon of to-day shall, therefore, be on alms-giving, on the necessity and beauty of which the Holy Fathers have preached so often and so fervently, that it almost makes the impression that heaven is opened or shut by complying with or neglecting this sacred duty. Therefore, be anxious to give alms.

PART I.

IT IS A DISTINCT PRECEPT TO GIVE ALMS.

I. A precept of justice, engraved in the hearts of all, to give everyone what is due to him, and, therefore, to give alms to the poor. This precept is

1. As undeniable as God's existence itself. For, if there is a God, Father of all, He must provide the necessary means for the support of all. The distribution of earthly goods has been made, and many, very many, have received nothing. Either Providence has failed, or the share of the poor is laid in the hands of the rich, who, to correspond with God's purposes, must give alms.

2. Strictly obligatory, *a.* according to the Old Testament: "There will not be wanting poor in the land of thy habitation; therefore I command thee to open thy hand to thy needy and poor brother, that liveth in the land." Deut. xv, 11. It is remarkable that, according to a divine disposition, there are always poor, that the rich may have an opportunity of fulfilling

the duty of alms-giving. *b.* According to the teaching of Jesus Christ: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. * * * For I was hungry and you gave Me not to eat." Mt. xxv, 41 ff. Or, is it marvelous that neither thieves, nor the covetous, nor extortioners shall possess the kingdom of God? I. Cor. vi, 10.

3. A proof of divine wisdom. Or why has God left the care of one with the good will of the other? *a.* That all may have an opportunity of gaining heaven; the rich by charity, the poor by patience. *b.* That there may be strong bonds of attachment between men by charity and gratitude.

II. A precept of charity: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Mt. xxii, 39.

1. Love in general is proven by acts—excites to deeds. The greatest love is "that a man lay down his life for his friends" John xv, 13., the least to save from death by appeasing the hunger of those whom we are obliged to love. Love urges us to give alms.

2. Love of our neighbor, like the love of ourselves, obliges us to bestow benefits on him, since we wish all good to ourselves, and naturally desire to benefit ourselves. "To refuse food to the poor is to deliver them unto death." St. Ambrose. Wherefore, far from being love, the refusal of charitable works is simply hatred.

3. Love confounds all so-called excuses, such as: "We have nothing to spare; at the end of the year there is no abundance to be seen," etc. No, indeed, after vanity, amusements, debauchery, have devoured everything! On the day of judgment the use you have made of God's benefits will be subjected to a close scrutiny.

## PART II.

### REWARD OF ALMS-GIVING.

This reward consists:

I. In the purest joy of heart.

1. Every good deed is followed by this joy of heart, which is often on earth the only, but the best, reward of hidden virtue. "Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience." II Cor. i, 12.

2. It is emphatically alms, works of charity, that give us a taste of this holy joy; especially such works of mercy as *a.* to help in extreme necessity, to protect innocence, or to keep the unfortunate from despairing, or *b.* to sow everywhere blessings and joy like a heavenly seed. Truly a blessed priesthood of Providence, whose ministrations are more delightful to look upon than piles of money and earthly treasures.

II. In accumulating an abundance of supernatural blessings.

1. Forgiveness of sins. "Alms delivereth from death; and the same is that which purgeth away sins." Tobias xii, 9. The prophet Daniel advised King Nebuchadnezzar: "Redeem thy sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor: perhaps He will forgive thy offences." Dan. iv, 24. "Water quencheth a flaming fire: and alms resisteth sins." Ecclus. iii, 33.

2. Life everlasting. "Alms maketh to find mercy and life everlasting." Tob. xii, 9. "Come, ye Blessed of My Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat," etc. Mt. xxv, 34. By possessing earthly goods, you possess the keys of heaven, for which others shed their tears and blood.

III. In obtaining temporal blessings. "He that lendeth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and He will repay him." Prov. xix, 17. We often see repeated what happened to the widow at Sarepta. Because she had shown mercy to Elias the prophet, "the pot of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil was not diminished." III Kings, xvii, 16. "Some distribute their own goods and grow richer: others take away what is not their own, and are always in want." Prov. xi, 24.

*Peroration:* Ye poor, suffering members of Christ, God takes care of you. You who are blessed with earthly goods, forget not the precept to give alms—you but restore what does not belong to you. Forget not the reward—you lend to the Lord who repays a hundred fold. "Do not forget to do good, and to impart: for by such sacrifices God's favor is obtained." Hb. xiii, 16.

Claudius de la Colombiére.

## II.

## GRACES RECEIVED IN HOLY COMMUNION.

The miraculous feeding of five thousand men with five loaves is a symbol of the Holy Eucharist. The Council of Trent (sess. xiii cap. ii) says that in this blessed Sacrament our Saviour has exhausted, as it were, all the treasures of his divine love. Every Sacrament imparts grace to the worthy receiver, but this excels them all: it is the accomplishment of all the Sacraments. It is by the Holy Eucharist that the words of the Psalmist are fulfilled: "Thou has visited the earth, and hast plentifully watered it," *i. e.*, with the streams of Thy grace. Let us contemplate these miraculous streams, *i. e.*, the graces received by a worthy holy Communion.

1. Your soul is most intimately united with Jesus Christ, and almost deified. This effect was intimated by Jesus Himself, when He said: "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me." John vi, 57, 58. It is expressed by the very word 'Communion.'

2. Your soul receives light for the knowledge of divine things, and is filled with heavenly sweetness and joy. The two disciples were a good while with Jesus on their way to Emmaus; but they did not know him till he broke the bread. "Let us break this bread, and we shall know Him also." St. Aug. "Come ye to him and be enlightened." Ps. xxxiii, 6. "It is this Sacrament that makes us partake of the society of the angels and imparts to us a celestial illumination." St. Albertus Magnus. And as its reception is an anticipation of the celestial vision, it fills your soul with joy. St. Therese, St. Catharine of Siena, St. Magdalen de Pazzis, were let into the depths of divine wisdom. The latter felt an indescribable delight whenever she returned from the Communion table.

3. Your soul is cleansed from venial sins. All the Sacra-

ments are instituted for our sanctification. Ergo. * * * This grace is intimated by the words spoken by the priest: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," and by the words of Consecration: "This is the chalice of My blood, of the new and eternal testament, that shall be shed for you and for many for the remission of sins."—"As this Lamb is slain for the remission of sins, so it is eaten now-a-days for the same purpose." St. Paschasius. The Council of Trent (sess. xiii, qr. i.) says that by the Holy Eucharist "we are delivered from our daily trespasses, and protected against mortal sins."

4. Your soul is armed for the struggle against her enemie

*a*. Against concupiscence. The Holy Fathers call this Sacrament a fountain, in which the fire of sensuality is extinguished. Indeed it cannot be otherwise, as our flesh comes in contact with the virginal flesh of Jesus.

*b*. Against the attacks of the devil. "Thou hast prepared a table before me against them that afflict me." Ps. xxii, 5. "When we leave this table, we are formidable to the devil; we are lions breathing fire." St. Chrysostom.

5. Your soul is strengthened to persevere on the path of virtue. Jesus calls His flesh a '*food*.' According to the Council of Florence, the Holy Eucharist produces the same effects relative to the soul, that corporal food produces relative to the body. This effect is intimated by the words of Jesus: "Surgite, eamus," let us go fearlessly into the struggle, after you have eaten the bread of the strong. It was Holy Eucharist that strengthened the ancient Christians so as to save their innocence in the midst of the corrupt world of paganism, and face the death of martyrdom. When the Israelites were eating their Paschal Lamb, they held staffs in their hands, as if to foreshadow that the Holy Eucharist, the Paschal Lamb of the Christians, would be a staff for their frailty.

6. Your soul receives a pledge of her eternal salvation. Proofs are:

*a*. The words of Jesus. "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life." John vi, 55. Cf. Trid. xiii, cp. 2.

*b.* The Liturgy. "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ may protect thy soul unto life everlasting." Calix novi et *æterni* testamenti, *i. e.*, Jesus maketh us heirs of eternal life.

*c.* It takes away the bitterness of death, wherefore we call it a foretaste of eternal bliss, and it is to our body the pledge of resurrection. "I will raise him up on the last day." John vi, 55. When the dead man had touched the bones of Eliseus in his sepulchre, he came to life and stood upon his feet. IV Kings, xiii. How much more will he rise to everlasting life who has eaten the flesh of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist?

*Peroration:* There are, nevertheless, many receivers of this Blessed Sacrament who do not partake of these precious graces. But the fault is with the receivers, because they approach without any preparation, *i. e.*, in the state of mortal sin, after a sacrilegious confession. "Mors est malis," Cf. i, Cor. xi, 17. Example of Judas Ischariot. Or with imperfect preparations, viz.: without zeal, or desire for grace, out of mere custom. Or there is no correspondence with the grace of the Blessed Sacrament. But sometimes God prevents the grace from being perceived—for the sake of our humiliation. In such cases the Holy Eucharist, nevertheless, augments virtue, though unperceived, and strengthens against relapse. We find many proofs of this in the lives of the Saints. Endeavour faithfully to participate in the many graces of this Sacrament, and never receive it unworthily. Woe to such a man!

Hauber.

## Passion Sunday.

### I.

### SINFULNESS OF LYING.

The object of the Saviour's discourse, of which to-day's Gospel forms but a part, was to prove that He was a divine teacher of truth, and His enemies were adversaries of truth. After Jesus had reproached them with scattering lies and calumnies against Him for the purpose of combating His doctrine, and shown them that their morals were not in keeping with their pretended knowledge of God, He called them explicitly *liars*. John viii. 55. Instead of becoming excited over the malice of those liars, we had better reflect on ourselves, in order to know, whether we love the lie more than the truth, darkness more than light. It is, therefore, on the sinfulness of lying, that I wish now to engage your attention.

EVERY LIE IS A SIN.

I. Reason teaches us that every lie is detestable.

1. It is against nature.

*a.* Reason is the faculty of knowing the truth: language is the faculty of expressing one's thoughts. He that does not employ both faculties for the purpose designed by the Creator, abuses the most precious gifts of God, and resembles him who would mutilate his eyes for the purpose of being blind.

*b.* This faculty comes from God, the source of truth, and makes us His image. The liar dishonors God and the works of His wisdom.

*c.* Besides the faculty of knowing, we have the desire of possessing, the truth. How great was the thirst of the ancient philosophers after truth! How unpleasant is it for everyone to be deceived! Wherefore, the liar, being a sinner contra naturam, is justly [illegible] among a band of robbers and outlaws.

2. It is a very pest in society.

*a.* It undermines fidelity and faith, renders countless means of safety necessary. It is lying that introduced the oath. "Let your speech be, yea, yea, no, no: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh from evil." Mt. v, 37. A lie is the mother of fraud, hypocrisy, and distrust.

*b.* The liar destroys his honor and usefulness. People will not believe him. His sense of morality is weakened; he becomes shameless, malicious, incorrigible.

II. The teachings of Revelation show us still more the evil and sinfulness of lying. They show us

1. The origin of lying. "You are of your father, the devil; and the desires of your father you will do * * * He is a liar, and the father thereof." John viii, 44. "Lying is a diabolical invention." St. Basil.

2. Its baseness. "A lie is a foul blot in a man * * * A thief is better than a man that is always lying: but both of them shall inherit destruction. The manners of lying men are without honor; and their confusion is with them without ceasing." Eccles. xx, 26-28.

3. Its malignity. "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal faithfully please Him." Prov. xii, 22.

4. Its consequences. "Woe to them that are of a double heart." Eccles. ii, 14. Woe to the body and the soul, for time and eternity. Jacob was severely punished for his lie. Punishment of Ananias and Saphira. "The mouth that belieth, killeth the soul." Wisd. i, 11. "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment." Mt. xii, 37. How much more for lying words? "To all liars—their portion shall be in the pool burning with fire and brimstone." Apoc. xxi, 8.

III. Every lie without exception is forbidden, though it admits of different degrees of malignity. We distinguish

1. Hypocrisy, or the pretense of being better than you really are. "It is properly a two-fold malignity, composed of real wickedness and a pretense of probity." St. Aug.

2. Simulation, being a false self-humiliation, a feigned

humility. "If you lie for the sake of humility, you become a sinner by doing so, if you were not so before."

3. 'White lie.' Peter's lie, in order to save himself from trouble, rebuked and repented. The Holy Martyrs could have often saved their lives by one lie.

4. Lies for the benefit of others. "It does not cease being a lie, if you can benefit others by it." St. Aug. Cf. Rom. iii, 8. A man persecuted by his enemy took refuge in the room of St. Lidwina. When the enemy on entering inquired after him, the mother of the Saint to save his life, said he was not there, whilst the daughter confessed the truth. Whereupon the mother struck her. But the eyes of the persecutor were blinded so as not to see him whom he sought to kill. After he had left, the holy daughter said to her mother: "I was convinced that the truth would help the man in danger more than a lie."

5. Lies in jest. St. Thomas Aqu., when a mere youth, was often mocked by his fellow-students for his piety. They once said to him: "Lo, Thomas, a flying ox!" Thomas, looking around, asked them, where. Whereupon they all laughed, saying: "Why, you know, no ox can fly." And St. Thomas gave the remarkable answer: "I had thought it more probable that an ox could fly, than that a Christian would lie." His companions laughed no more.

IV. Causes of lying. As God is the truth, and Satan the liar from beginning, it follows that lying originates in the defection from God and the inclination to sin. Wherefore it is caused

1. By lack of watchfulness. In consequence of being careless in the use of your tongue, sins of the tongue are necessarily committed. "If any man think himself religious, not bridling his tongue * * * this man's religion is vain." James i, 26.

2. By immorality. Indifference in regard to God and His commandments, arrogance, pride, avarice, envy, in short every vice is found connected with lying in some one of its forms, such as calumny, fraud, perjury, etc.

3. By a perverse education. Children become accustomed to telling lies,

*a.* When they hear lies in the family: the mother belies the father, etc.

*b.* When parents belie or deceive their children.

*c.* When parents, by cruel treatment, force the children to lie. It often happens that the mother will induce the child to lie, in order to escape the father's punishment.

*d.* When they treat truthful and lying children in the wrong way. Truthful children should not be punished severely, lying children should be punished quite severely. A lie should *always* be punished.

*Peroration:* Lying and falsehood are the distinguishing mark of Satan's reign, while truth is the special feature of God's reign and of His children. Now make your choice accordingly.

Scherer.

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## II.

## JESUS HIDES HIMSELF.

As the Church to-day draws the attention of her children exclusively to the propritiatory death of the Saviour of the world, this present Sunday is named Passion-Sunday. The joyful prayer, "Gloria Patri," is said no more at Holy Mass: by the Epistle Christ, the High-Priest, is represented to us as entering into the sanctuary, having obtained eternal redemption; by the Gospel this same High-Priest is represented as undefiled with sin, offering Himself an unspotted sacrifice to divine justice. By the Preface the glory and dignity of the Holy Cross, on which His sacrifice was offered, is extolled; and as if we could not express sufficiently our sadness, we veil this tree of life, the Holy Cross, on our altars. At the same time this veiling of the cross calls to our minds the words of the Gospel: "Jesus hid Himself." And thus the veiled cross is a solemn warning to us not to be the cause of Jesus hiding Himself from us.

### PART I.

### JESUS HID HIMSELF CORPORALLY.

I. When, after He had fed five thousand men in a miraculous manner, the Jews would make Him king (John vi. 15), He hid Himself

1. On account of the selfishness of the Jews, who, taking Him for an earthly king, hoped to become, through him, the greatest nation of the world. But "His kingdom was not of this world." John xviii, 36.

2. On account of their rebellious spirit against the existing power of the Romans.

II. When "the Jews took up stones, to cast at Him" (John viii, 59), Jesus hid Himself

1. On account of their infidelity. It is for the same reason that Jesus hid Himself on other occasions. Cf. John xii, 36.

2. On account of their hatred of the truth. Being worldly-minded they would not listen to Him; the word of truth which He announced to them only exasperated them.

III. He hid Himself from two disciples who went to Emmaus. Lk. xxiv, 15. It is true, Jesus drew near, and went with them; but their eyes were held, that they should not know Him. I. e. V, 16. He hid Himself, therefore,

1. On account of their feeble faith;

2. On account of their pusillanimity. They confess it themselves, whereupon Jesus charges them with "being foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all the things which the prophets have spoken." V. 25.

PART II.

JESUS HIDES HIMSELF SPRITUALLY.

I. From whom?

1. From the wordlings. They either have no desire for celestial things, or are too much engaged in their worldly affairs to save time for something better. They are indifferent as to what God has done for their redemption. When He calls on them, they answer: "I have bought a farm," etc. Lk. xiv, 18-20. Their factories, stores, etc., are dearer to them than the work of their salvation.

2. From the proud. Pride manifests itself as *a.* infidelity, *b.* as disobedience, *c.* as self-exaltation. Men of this disposition, as St. Augustin says, are their own light, wherefore, in regard to them, Jesus, the true light, shineth in darkness (John i, 5).

It is contrary to the spirit of God's Son who is humility, and teaches humility. "God resisteth the proud." I Pet. v, 5.

3. From sinners, who ill-use Him. "They take up stones to cast at Him. Seeing, they see, and perceive not, and hearing, they hear, and do not understand." Mk. iv, 12, and thus fall into the abyss of utter depravity and hardness of heart.

4. From the cowardly Christians. They long after truth and salvation; but they will not master their sluggishness, their fear of men and the world, *a.* for want of confidence in God; *b.* for want of reasonable self-confidence. "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father, Who is in heaven." Mt. x, 33.

II. How does He hide Himself? What follows from it?

1. He hides Himself to the *understanding*, depriving it of the light of the truth that teaches man the object and meaning of this life, his eternal destiny, and the means leading to it. The light of faith grows fainter and fainter, till it is extinguished. His thoughts and conceptions are obscured and confused; he does not know himself any more. All is darkness within him, around him, above him. He hides Himself

2. To the *heart*, taking away from men the taste for virtue, which alone reconciles man to God. Then the lower passions of man are aroused, sensuality rules him, the voice of conscience is reduced to silence, and the sense of duty dies out. He hides Himself

3. To the *mind*, taking away from man that true peace which springs from the blessed union of faith and virtue.

4. In *life* and *death*. There is no moderation in prosperity, no consolation in misfortune, no courage in temptation, no confidence at the last trying hour.

III. Where does He hide Himself? Where should we seek Him? He fled

1. Into the mountain. The mountain points to heaven. Sursum corda. "Seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on the earth." Col. iii, 1, 2.

2. Into the wilderness. Spiritual solitude, prayer, meditation, penance.

3. Into the *triclinium* ("dining-room.") There it is that He makes Himself known to His disciples. It is in the church that you will find Him, by receiving the holy Sacraments, especially the Blessed Eucharist.

*Peroration:* Let us always use our best endeavours, and labor with a holy solicitude, that the Lord may not hide Himself from us. Let our life be "hidden with Christ in God," Col. iii, 3, so "that neither life nor death * * * shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Bishop Foerster.

## Palm Sunday.

### I.
### ON EASTER COMMUNION.

How different was the manner in which Jesus was received on His solemn entry into Jerusalem! (This entrance may be briefly described.) His disciples and the good, simple-hearted people met Him with great joy, and it is to them that He comes triumphantly, as their King: "Behold, thy king cometh to thee, meek." Mt. xxi, 5. The Pharisees, scribes and priests meet Him as enemies, their hearts full of sin and hatred, and it is for these blind men particularly that Jesus shed tears of compassion. Jesus meets, at the present day, with the same reception from the Christians at their Easter Communion. To those who receive Him worthily he enters triumphantly; to those who receive Him in a sacrilegious state of soul, He enters with sadness, weeping over them.

PART I.

SOME RECEIVE HIM AS HIS DISCIPLES DID.

1. "The whole multitude of His disciples began with joy to praise God." Lk. xix, 37. To receive Holy Communion worthily, we must be His disciples by faith and virtue. It was only with His disciples that Jesus would celebrate the pasch. Therefore, "let none approach but His friends, no one who is avaricious, no one who is a usurer, no one who is unchaste." St. Chrysot. "Let a man prove himself; and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice." I Cor. xi, 28. You can not defer your conversion any longer, the time is urgent. The Master saith: "My time is near at hand; I will keep the pasch at thy house." Mt. xxvi, 18.

2. "A great multitude, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, * * * went forth to meet Him." John xii, 12, 13. It is unbecoming to defer your Communion till the very last day of the Easter time, a practice which is the

more reprehensible, as the priest might not find you worthy of receiving this blessed sacrament, and you would not have time to render yourself worthy. "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," Mt. xxv, 6, He is at the door of your heart. "Go ye forth to meet Him." *i. e.*, Go out of, that is, renounce your passions, etc. "Let us anticipate His coming by confession," *i. e.*, by confessing our sins in the holy Sacrament of Penance. Ps. xciv, 2.

3. "They took branches of palm trees." John xii, 13. "Others cut down boughs from the trees," Mk. vi, 11, viz.: from the olive trees, because the multitude of His disciples met Him near the descent of Mount Olivet. Lk. xix, 37. We must not approach Jesus unless we have the palm-branch in our hands, that is to say, unless we have subdued our passions by earnest endeavors; and unless peace with God is restored to our hearts (olive-boughs).

4. "And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way." Mt. xxi, 8. Put off the garment of sin, vanity, pride, lust, etc. Thus being prepared, invite Him into your heart. "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold, thy king cometh to thee, meek." Mt. xxi, 5. This prophecy is fulfilled in Holy Communion also. There He comes as king. "The kingdom of God is within you." Lk. xvii, 21. His abode is in your heart. He is a meek king, because He hides His majesty that the poor child of Adam may not be frightened by the excess of His glory. He comes to *you*, to each of you with the infinite wealth of His graces. Call to mind that it is the same king to Whom, after His entrance into Jerusalem, "The blind and the lame came in the temple, and He healed them." xxi. 14. Show Him the wounds of your soul. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed." Jerem, xvii, 14. "Only say the word" and my soul shall be healed.

## PART II.

### SOME RECEIVE HIM AFTER THE MANNER OF THE PHARISEES.

1. They receive Jesus in their Easter Communion "because they fear the people," (Lk. xx, 19,) to keep up their reputation as good Christians.

2. They gather a council against Jesus (John xi, 47), studying the ways of satisfying their passions anew; they make the resolution to kill Him and crucify Him again by being resolved to continue their vicious life.

3. "The Pharisees were moved with indignation when they saw the wonderful things that Jesus did. Mt. xxi, 25. Those who make a sacrilegious communion, pretend not to believe in the good effects of Holy Communion produced in others, and deny the wonders of this Sacrament by their own abuse of its graces.

*Peroration:* What is better, not to receive your Easter Communion at all, or to receive it unworthily? Either way leads to hell. If you do not receive at all, you exclude yourself from the Church; if you receive it unworthily, you commit a tremendous sacrilege. Therefore do not stay away, but receive it. Receive it not unworthily, but with due preparation, and you will partake of life everlasting.

Bourdaloue.

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## II.

## JESUS OUR MEEK AND HUMBLE KING.

To-day the prophecy is fulfilled: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy king will come to thee, the Just and Saviour; He is poor and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Zach. ix, 9. Immediately before His Sacred Passion, before His humiliation, Jesus sends forth a ray of the light of His dignity and glory; and immediately before the commemoration of His Sacred Passion, the Church invites our attention to His solemn entrance into Jerusalem, that thus, from His eminent dignity, we might form an exalted opinion of the grandeur of His redemption. The dignity of Jesus consists in His being our king.

### I. OUR KING IN HUMILITY.

1. Jesus is our King.

*a.* The prophecies announce Him as such. "A child is

born to us, * * and the government is upon His shoulders. His empire shall be multiplied, * * He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom." Is. ix, 6. "Behold, thy king will come to thee." Zach. ix, 9. "And of His kingdom there shall be no end." Lk. i, 33.

*b.* He avowed Himself a king. "All things are delivered to Me by My Father." Mt. xi, 27. "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth." Mt. xxviii, 18. "Thou sayest that I am a king," was His answer to Pilate's question. John xviii, 37.

*c.* He proved by the power of His will that He was a king. "If any man shall say any thing to you, say ye, that the Lord hath need of them: and forthwith He will let them go." Mt. xxi, 3. With royal pomp the Son of David's house enters Jerusalem. He accepts the welcome of the people and the children, and with irresistible power He casts the buyers and sellers out of the temple.

2. Jesus is our humble King.

*a.* He refused royal honors. When some one asked Him: "Master, speak to my brother that he may divide the inheritance with me," He replied: "Man, who hath made Me a judge or a divider over you?" Luc. xii, 13. "When Jesus, after the miraculous feeding of 5,000 men, perceived that they would come to take Him by force, and make Him king, He fled again into the mountain, Himself alone." John vi, 15.

*b.* In opposition to the presumption of the Jews, He would never act or appear as king. "My kingdom is not of this world, * * * but now My kingdom is not from hence." John xviii, 36.

*c.* He debased Himself in all humility. He entered into Jerusalem a poor king. "Behold, thy king, * * * He is poor." Zach. ix, 9. A few days afterwards He was made a mock king. "And bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, King of the Jews." Mt. xxvi, 29. His royal title was put on the cross over His head, as cause of His death: "And they put over His head His cause written: "This is Jesus, King of the Jews." Mt. xxvii, 37. Verily, "Jesus debased

Himself * * * becoming obedient unto death, even the death, of the cross." Philip ii, 8.

3. Follow Him in His humility. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Philip ii, 5.

*a.* By contrition and a sincere confession of your sins.

*b.* By resignation in adversities. "Be you humbled under the mighty hand of God." I Pet. v, 6.

*c.* By humility in earthly happiness. "Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded." I Tim. vi, 17.

II. OUR MEEK KING, AS YOU MAY SEE

1. From the purpose of His coming—of His incarnation—He comes as a friend and saviour, and wants to be loved, not to be feared. "The Son of man did not come to destroy souls, but to save." Lk. ix, 56. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Lk xix, 10. "God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him." John iii, 17.

2. From His earthly life.

*a.* He was full of love and mercy towards the suffering, whom He invited to come to Him. "Come to Me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." Mt. xi, 28. "And Jesus went about all Galilee * * * healing all diseases and infirmities among the people." Mt. iv, 24. He "went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil." Act. x, 38. "The goodness and kindness of our Saviour God appeared." Titus iii, 4.

*b.* He was full of mercy and tenderness towards sinners and His own enemies. Behold the tears which He shed over the obstinacy and ruin of Jerusalem. Lk. xix, 41 ff. Hear His meek question: "Whom seek ye?" John xviii, 4. He suffers His betrayer to kiss Him. "Friend, whereto art thou come?" Mt. xxvi, 50. He looked on Peter with so much compassion that he went out and wept bitterly. Lk. xxii, 61. "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and He shall not open His mouth." Is. liii, 7. He

prays for those who crucified Him, and promises paradise to the poor wretch at His side. Lk. xxiii. 33 and 43.

3. From the experience of your own life. Jesus came to you as a meek king, *a.* in your *afflictions*, to console you; *b.* in your *sins*, which He bore in patience; in your conversion, the work of His mercy. Strip yourselves of the old man with His deeds, as the Jews stripped themselves of their garments, and let Jesus walk over your former self.

4. "Learn of your king to be meek of heart also." Mt. xi, 29.

*a.* As a superior towards your subjects.

*b.* Towards sinners and your enemies. Jesus was merciful to you; is it not proper for you to be merciful to your brother? Vide Gal, vi, 1, Mt. v. 44.

*c.* In tribulations and afflictions. Vide Bar. iv, 25. "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation." Rom. xii, 12.

*Peroration:* It is in a special manner in these days that the Holy Church exhorts us to imitate our king, who is meek of heart: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Philp. ii, 5. She beseeches us "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" to imitate His humility and meekness.

Stauss.

## Easter Sunday.

### I.

### OUR SAVIOUR RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

The Resurrection of Christ is the best proof of His Divinity, the strongest seal of His doctrines, the key-stone of our redemption, the figure of our spiritual, the pledge of our bodily resurrection. Therefore, all the circumstances of His Resurrection are of the highest importance. We confine ourselves, however, to the explanation of a few words addressed by the Angel to the women who had come to the Sepulchre: "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; He is risen." Mk. xvi, 6.

#### I. "JESUS."

This holy name reminds us of the infinite kindness of our Lord; for Jesus means Saviour, and what charity could be greater than this, that for the sake of our salvation, Jesus shall embrace death? The great benefits and blessings obtained for us by our Redeemer's love are also made known to us by His Resurrection, for by this miracle of miracles Jesus delivered us

1. From the power of the devil, whom He conquered, whose power He broke. "Divesting principalities and powers, He made a show of them confidently, triumphing openly over them in Himself." Col. ii, 15.

2. From death, whom He conquered on this glorious day. Therefore St. Gregory says in the prayer composed by him for the Mass of to-day: "O God, who on this day, through thy only begotten Son, victorious over death, hast opened the entrance to eternal life," etc. And the Church sings in the preface: "Who by dying destroyed our death, and by rising repaired life." In Christ's Resurrection we behold His victory over death, wherefore it is said. "Death is swallowed up in victory." I Cor. xv, 54. He shall cast death down headlong forever, and the Lord God shall wipe away tears from every face," etc. Is. xxv, 8.

3. From hell, which He overcame and bound on this day

of victory. It is true, "He descended into hell," but not to be retained amongst the dead, but to announce to Limbo its end, to the hell of the damned the salvation of mankind, which without redemption would have become its prey. "He hath broken gates of brass and burst iron bars." Ps. cvi, 16.

II. "OF NAZARETH."

This may be applied to the beauty of Him that was risen. For "Nazarene" means "The Blooming," and blossoms and flowers are symbols of beauty. Therefore the bride says: "I am the flower of the fields, and the lily of the valleys." Cant. ii, 1. It is with reason that we may say of Jesus in His Resurrection: "The flowers have appeared in our land." V. 12. Jesus is

1. Adorned with a wreath of roses or red flowers. These are the numerous drops of His sacred blood which He shed for us.

2. Encompassed with lilies or white flowers, the splendor of His glorified body. "My beloved is white and ruddy. * * * His lips are as lilies dropping choice myrrh." Cant. v, 10, 13. Therefore He can find no delight but in pure souls and bodies; "My beloved feedeth among the lilies." Cant. ii, 16.

3. Adorned with violets, symbolizing the glorious marks of His wounds by which we were healed. I Pet. ii, 24.

III. "WHO WAS CRUCIFIED."

From this title of the Risen we "know the charity of Christ, which surpasseth knowledge." Eph. iii, 19. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John xv, 13. It was the *Cross* that Jesus chose to die on, for the following reasons:

1. That there should not be the slightest doubt of His death, and in consequence thereof, of His true Resurrection. Therefore He was lifted up before a countless multitude of spectators, so that all should be witnesses of His death, and the entire destruction of His vital organism, and that thus the miracle of His Resurrection and glorified restoration might appear in greater lustre. Bf. Act. x, 39-41.

2. That a tree of life might be planted, which by its fruit

should revive all, after the fruit of death had also proceeded from a tree. Therefore in the Preface: "Who hast appointed the salvation of mankind to be wrought on the (tree) wood of the cross."

3. That the devil, who had conquered mankind on a tree, might also be conquered on a tree, as the Preface says: "That he who conquered on a tree, might be conquered on the tree also."

### IV. "HE IS RISEN."

This word contains the substance of the holy joy of this day to which the Church applies the words: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice therein." Ps. cxvii, 24. The sacred joy of this solemn day was shared

1. By Heaven, which sent its angels down. "An angel of the Lord descended from heaven." Mt. xxviii, 2.

2. By the earth, which (as it were) was lifted up for joy: "Behold there was a great earthquake." Mt. xxviii, 2.

3. By Limbo, sending forth its Saints. "The graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints that had slept, arose, and coming out of the tombs after His Resurrection, came into the holy city, and appeared to many." Mt. xxvii, 52, 53.

### V. "YOU SEEK" HIM.

Such is the love of these devout women. They teach us by their example how we should seek Jesus in order to find Him. Jesus himself exhorts us: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." We seek Jesus and His kingdom:

1. By Faith; by which alone the infallible light of full truth can be found.

2. By Hope; the lifting up of our mind to Him who sits at the right of the majesty of the Father, incites us to labor for God's honor.

3. By Charity; the ardent desire for the object of our love urges us to strive for union with Him.

Thus Faith, Hope and Charity, are those three Marys who seek and find Him who is risen.

St. Thomas Aq.

## II.

## THE PASCHAL LAMB.

Truly a wonderful Lamb of which St. John the Evangelist (Apocal., V. 1) writes that He alone could open the book, and loose the seals thereof, and this Lamb, "Christ, our pasch, is sacrificed." I Cor. v, 7. No creature could open the sealed book, *i. e.*, reveal and realize the divine counsels; no creature could gain the victory over paganism. This our Paschal Lamb, Jesus Christ, alone could do by His divine power. It is for this victory that all creatures in heaven give the Lamb "honor, and glory, and benediction." (Apoc. v, 12.) It is over this victory that on this day, the most glorious feast of the Lamb, all generations on earth rejoice. Who, then, is this wonderful Lamb? A question worthy to receive an answer.

Holy Scripture calls this divine Lamb:

I. A LAMB UNSPOTTED AND UNDEFILED. I PET. I, 19.

Our Paschal Lamb is an innocent Lamb. The Greek word agnos (lamb) denotes "pious." The Paschal Lamb is an innocent, pious lamb:

1. Pious towards God.

*a.* The lamb falls on his knees, when it takes rest or arises. St. Francis Assis, who had a special love for lambs as symbols of the Lamb of God, had a lamb that followed him into Church, and at the elevation fell on his knees as if to worship his Creator, and confound the irreverence of many Christians at the Holy Sacrifice.

*b.* How pious towards God was the Paschal Lamb! He went out into the mountain to pray, and He passed whole nights in the prayer of God. Lk. vi, 12. In the garden of olives He knelt down and prayed (xxii, 41), fell flat on the ground and prayed (Mk. xiv, 35); nay, fell upon His face praying. Mt. xxvi, 39.

*c.* We should become pious lambs also, who follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goeth. Apoc. xiv, 4. St. James fell

daily one hundred times on his knees to pray ; prayed often. St. Paula often prayed until sunrise, prayed with perseverance. St. Aloysius had during six months not so many distractions as to fill out the time of one Hail Mary; he prayed with devotion. St. Theodosius used to move his lips as if praying, whilst sleeping; he prayed incessantly.

2. Pious towards men.

*a.* The lamb offends nobody, loves everyone, and is kind to man, whom it clothes.

*b.* Thus our Paschal Lamb, Jesus Christ, offended nobody, but went about doing good. Act. x, 38. How tenderly He loved Lazarus! John xi, 36. John, who was leaning on His bosom. John xiii, 23. How He rejoiceth when He finds the sheep which is gone astray! Mt. xviii, 12. "With how great a desire hath He desired to eat this pasch with you!" Lk. xxii, 15.

*c.* Pious, charitable, and merciful have been all those who followed the footsteps of the Lamb. For, who counts the work and monuments of Christian charity, of the Johns of God, the Johns of Matha, the Vincents de Paul, and the other heroes of Christian charity?

3. Pious in regard to Himself.

*a.* The lamb is innocent and meek by nature. There is no deceit in his mouth. Is. liii, 9. No craftiness about him as with the serpent, no cunning, as with the fox, no pride as with the peacock.

*b.* Our Paschal Lamb is vested with the garment of innocence ; His very eyes reveal His meekness. Behold Him in His innocence before Herod. Behold Him at the Elevation in the hands of the priest, sacrificing Himself for the sins of the world! Indeed, an unspotted, undefiled Lamb, "who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree." I Pet. ii, 24.

*c.* In the same way the followers of the Lamb labor to protect themselves against sin, "that, being dead to sins, they may live to justice." I Pet. ii, 24. It is especially the virginal souls of all ages that follow the pious, pure, and innocent Lamb of God. Apoc. xiv, 4.

II. A PATIENT AND MEEK LAMB.

1. The lamb is patient and meek, not defending himself against offences, nor taking revenge. He waits patiently for his food; he does not open his mouth before the shearer, nor even when led to the slaughter.

2. It is then with good reason that Jesus is compared to a lamb. "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and He shall not open His mouth." Is. liii, 7. Philip, explaining this text to the eunuch of the Queen Candace, preached to him Jesus. Act. viii, 35. Behold this meek Lamb before the tribunal of Pilate, who wondered exceedingly. Mt. xxvii, 14. Accompany Him on his way to Golgotha, and you will hear no plaintive voice out of His mouth.

3. Other lambs endeavored to follow this Lamb by being patient and meek. Blessed Nicolaa, a virgin of Picardie, suffered during half a century the greatest pains without any complaint; St. Lidwina, of Schiedam, for more than thirty years; St. Rose of Lima, etc.

III. A LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN. APOC. V, 6.

1. The innocent Lamb was slain. During Lent we have seen Him separated from the flock, tied hand and foot, driven to Mount Calvary, tormented and crucified. "Christ, our pasch, is sacrificed." I Cor. v, 7. "Howl, ye shepherds, and cry," (Jerem. xxv. 34,) for He that is "beautiful above the sons of men" (Ps. xliv,) is stretched out on the Cross, bathed in His own blood.

2. It is by this that we are saved from death. "The Lamb has redeemed the sheep." "You were not redeemed with corruptible gold or silver, * * * but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled." I Pet i, 18.

3. What thanks are to be offered to Him by the flock? No less than following Him whither He went—unto death.

*a.* Thus millions of martyrs followed Him. Remembering the slain Lamb, they suffered to be led like sheep to the slaughter.

*b.* Thus follow Him by mortification and self-denial all those who die to the world and the flesh.

*Peroration:* Let us all follow the Lamb of God in purity and innocence, for "there shall not enter into heaven anything defiled." Apoc. xxi, 27. In patience, for "in your patience you shall possess your souls." Lk. xxi, 19. In mortification and self-denial, for "ought not Christ (our Paschal Lamb) to have suffered all these things, and so enter into His glory?" Lk. xxiv, 26. That God is the Lamb slain for you, will be of no avail to you, unless you yourself are a Lamb of God.

B. Schels.

## Low Sunday.

### I.

### UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

During the forty days from His Resurrection to His Ascension, Jesus "appeared to His disciples, speaking of the kingdom of God." Act. i. 3. It is the belief of the Holy Fathers, that in those days our Saviour made known to His Apostles all the ordinances and dispositions relative to the foundation and government of His Church. The Gospel of this day manifests to us this gracious activity of the Lord. Therefore, it is in accordance with the spirit of the Ecclesiastical Year that I draw your attention to the nature of our Holy Church. There are four marks by which Christ's Church is distinguished from all heretical bodies. The First Ecumenical Council of Nice professes these marks, saying: "I believe in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." I propose to speak to-day of the first mark of the Church, of her Unity, and invite you to fix your thoughts on these two points: First: If Christ established a Church, she must be One. Second: It is our Holy Church to which alone this mark of Unity can be applied.

#### PART I.

#### THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST MUST BE ONE.

Every sincere Christian, whatever be his creed, will lament the many and great dissensions in Christendom. There have always been dissensions and heresies, but never so many as since the rise of Protestantism. A few years ago an official report enumerated fifty-six larger Christian denominations in the United States, whilst the smaller ones amounted to 288. This sectarianism cannot be in accordance with the will of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, He established not more than one Church, the proofs for which assertion we draw

I. *From Holy Scripture.* Among the many arguments we select: *Explicit declarations of Jesus Christ Himself.*

1. Mt. xvi, 18: "And I say to thee: That thou art Peter,

and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Here the Saviour *a.* speaks of *one* church, which He calls *His* church. *b.* There is in the ocean of time only one rock, upon which, as an immovable foundation-stone, He has built His church.

2. John x, 16: "And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be made one fold and one shepherd." To call together all the dispersed sheep of God, and bring them into one fold, is the will of Him who descended from heaven to feed all.

3. Lk. xi, 17: "Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and a house upon a house shall fall." Therefore, as for every kingdom, so for the Church of Christ, *unity* is the condition of life and existence. Need we marvel that our Lord shortly before His death prayed for this unity? Vide John xvii, 20, 21.

II. *From the names applied to the Church by Jesus and His Apostles.*

1. She is named a kingdom, a house, a family and a fold, all terms implying and requiring the idea of unity.

2. She is the body of Christ, and all the faithful are the members of this body. Eph. i, 23. Now there can not be more than one body under one head.

3. She is the bride of Jesus Christ. Vide Eph. i, 26, 27. "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." II Cor. xi, 2. The idea of bride involves unity.

Therefore it is that the Holy Apostles in their writings inculcate again and again the unity of the Church. Vide Eph. iv, 11-13; I Cor. i, 10, 13.

III. *From the writings of the Fathers*, who, without exception, defend the unity of the Church. St. Cyprian wrote an entire book on the subject, comparing the Church to the sun, the light of which is the same all the world over; to a tree, consisting of one trunk and many branches united by the one trunk, so that a branch cut off from the trunk can not vegetate; or to the one

ark of Noah, or to Christ's seamless garment, which was not cut by the soldiers.

IV. *From reason.*

1. The human race was created to constitute one family. It was in consequence of sin that this one family was divided into different nations. The Church of the New Covenant was destined to collect the different fragments of the human race and gather them again into one family. "In the last days the mountains of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Is ii, 2. Caiphas, the High-Priest, moved by the spirit of God, prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but to gather in one all the children of God, that were dispersed. John xi, 52. Consequently he that approves of more religions than one, denies the redemption by Christ, and to establish a National Church means to fall back into Paganism and Judaism.

2. For what purpose should there be two or more churches? Either they teach the same doctrines and have the same government, and then they are one Church, or their doctrines and government differ, and then only one can be from God, because He cannot make revelations contradictory to one another; V. g. that the Pope is the vicar of Christ and also Antichrist, that Holy Mass is the highest form of Worship and also idolatry, etc.

PART II.

IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ALONE IS THIS MARK OF UNITY.

Among the many so-called Christian denominations there is not one entitled to the mark of unity. The Catholic Church alone is One.

I. She professes the same faith at all times and in all places. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

1. De facto, as nobody can deny.

2. De jure, because she holds the principle by which alone unity can be established. The decisions of the bishops gathered into one council under the successor of St. Peter as their head.

and the decisions of the Pope speaking ex cathedra, are our rules of faith, to which we submit.

On the other hand, none of the other religious denominations have either (1) de facto the same faith, as we may judge simply from their different names, or (2) de jure, because the principle of unity, viz.: the interpretation of the Holy Bible according to private judgment, is not an adequate means of establishing and preserving unity.

II. She has everywhere the same divine service, the same number of Sacraments, the same ceremonies in substance, and even the same official language. This unity shines forth so much the more, as the Church does not suppress the characteristics and peculiarities of the different nations.

But where there is no unity of faith, there is no unity of worship and sacraments. We witness either the unity of despotism, as in the Russian Church, where even liberty of speech is denied, or differences and dissensions without end, as among the followers of the Reformation. The most important doctrines, the form of government, the sacraments of the Church, all are the subjects of a ceaseless controversy, in England, Germany, etc.

III. Not to speak of the Spirit of Jesus Christ animating the Church, the Successor of St. Peter is the Center and cause of the Unity in our beloved Church. In submission to him the bishops of the world govern the Church, and the priests and laity are obedient to their respective bishops as long as they are in union with the Apostolic See.

Wherever this foundation-stone, laid by Jesus Christ, was rejected, the broken fragments of Christendom sought their solidity and safety under the hands of earthly kings and queens, the Sultan not excepted, which experiment either had no favorable effect, or was the cause of spiritual tyranny and sterility.

*Peroration:* To live and die in union with the Church was the ardent desire of the faithful of all ages. Separation from the Church was always an abomination to him that saw in her the body of Jesus Christ and the ark of the New Covenant, a crime not expiated by martyrdom. * * * Where Peter is, there is

the Church. Adhere firmly to this rock, and imbibing the spirit of the Church, "be of one mind, have peace; and the God of peace and of love will be with you." II Cor. xiii, 11. This unity of faith and charity is the safe road leading to eternal salvation.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## WHY JESUS RETAINED THE GLORIOUS MARKS OF HIS SACRED WOUNDS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

Our Saviour Himself compares His bitter Passion to the labors of a woman (John xvi, 21); mankind was to be born again. As Benjamin to Rachel, (Gen. xxxv, 18,) so are we children of pain to Jesus; but to the Father we are children "of the right hand," as children of that second mother, the church that issued from His sacred side, as Elect who are once to be placed at His right hand. When the woman has brought forth the child, she is full of joy. After His sacred Passion, Jesus was also full of joy, and as a mark of His great joy He retained His sacred wounds in His body. For they are

### I. A SPECIAL GLORY OF HIS SACRED HUMANITY.

1. Jesus retained of His own free will the marks of His wounds. St. Augustine replied to Julian the Apostate: "Was it more difficult to blot out these marks, than to heal the wounds, and conquer death?"

2. Jesus sought His honor and glorification in the marks of His wounds. Was not the death of Jesus glorious? Consequently, the marks of His wounds were glorious also.

*a.* When a general has saved his native city against the attacks of a barbarous and cruel enemy, will he paint the scars of his wounds received in so glorious a cause?

*b.* And what did Jesus do? In whose power had the world been since Adam's sin? Was there ever a hero like the Son of man? "He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins." Is. lvi, 5.

3. Jesus retained the marks of His wounds as an ornament

of His human body, excelling in splendor the stars, the firmament, gold and precious stones. The Holy Fathers assert that the holy martyrs will also retain the marks of their sufferings after their resurrection.

II. A CONSOLATION FOR THE JUST.

The virtuous Christian finds his consolation not in the world, but in God. How consoling then must appear to him the marks of his Saviour's wounds! They are:

1. The visible proof of His infinite love. It was love that led Jesus into the midst of "His own." And yet "His own," to whom He had announced His coming, and before whom He proved His mission by miracles and by His divine doctrine, "received Him not." "And they shall say to Him: What are these wounds in the midst of Thy hands? And He shall say: With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved Me." Zach. xiii, 6.

2. Our refuge in temptations and sufferings. The wounds of Jesus have become for us the sources of grace and salvation, and the book of life. "Behold, I have graven thee in My hands." Is. xlix, 16. These sacred wounds have filled with joy the hearts of all good Christians in all ages,

*a.* Because our enemies are so powerful, and we are in need of a place of refuge, as the house of Rahab was for the spies. Jos. ii, 3.

*b.* Because Christ is the saving rock where those who are tempted or suffering, find a secure refuge, like David from Saul, like the dove from the bird of prey on the summit of the mountains. "My dove (soul) in the clifts of the rock, (Jesus' wounds) * * * show me thy face." Cant. ii, 14.

*c.* Kiss incessantly these sacred wounds with great confidence and tender love, and you will praise their power, like St. Jerome, who being tormented by the sting of his flesh, received the grace of an angelic purity from this beautiful devotion to the wounds of Jesus.

III. A TERROR FOR THE WICKED.

The sight of His sacred wounds will one day be dreadful to the murderers of God's Son; and it will be equally dreadful to the wicked generally.

1. In this life.

*a.* Is not the Crucifix a constant reproach to them? Is it not as if Jesus were showing to them His sacred hands expanded for prayer, His feet bloody from walking, His head and all His members wounded for their salvation? And yet all in vain. What ingratitude! What responsibility! "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced." Zach. xii, 10.

*b.* If their evil conscience is once awakened, it will cry out: "It is you who are crucifying again to yourselves the Son of God, and making a mockery of Him." Heb. vi. 6. Your pride platted His crown of thorns, your impurity stripped Him of His garments, your anger wounded Him, your envy filled Him with desolation.

2. On the day of the Last Judgment.

*a.* In the anguish of death they will comprehend the pains caused by Jesus' wounds; then bitter sorrow will fill their hearts, but this sorrow but too often turns into gloomy melancholy and despair.

*b.* When standing before the tribunal of the divine judge, convinced of Jesus being alive and having suffered for them, how they will tremble. It will be too late.

*Peroration:* From the constant affectionate remembrance of your Saviour's wounds you will draw invincible weapons against temptation, zeal and fervor in the practice of virtue, strength and consolation during life, and especially at the hour of death.

Braun.

## Second Sunday After Easter.

### I.
### CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

"And other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and they shall hear My voice: and there shall be made one fold and one shepherd." It is in these words that the destiny of the Church is expressed, viz., to embrace all nations, in short, to be Catholic.—In paganism they knew only national religions. Judaism itself was but a national religion.—It was the Christian Church that should spread over and embrace the world. (The preacher may construct his proof of this assertion from Ps. ii, 8; Mal. i, 11; Mat. xxviii, 19; Act. i, 8.) Therefore, our Lord compares His Church to a grain of mustard-seed, to leaven, to a human body growing to perfection. The Church has from the beginning carried out this design of her divine Master by sending messengers into the whole world, so that St. Paul could say: "Their sound went over all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world." It was with sacred pride that the Holy Fathers of the first centuries claimed the name *Catholic*. "Christian is my name, Catholic my surname," said St. Pacianus. The name, Catholic, because suggesting her destiny and calling, is the proper name of Christ's Church. We will now prove that our Church has the exclusive right to bear this glorious name. She is Catholic or universal (1.) in regard to time, (2.) in regard to place.

#### PART I.

#### OUR HOLY CHURCH IS CATHOLIC IN REGARD TO TIME.

I. Foreshadowed by the Jewish synagogue, she ran the race through all the Christian centuries. She witnessed the labors of the Apostles and the streams of blood that fertilized the vineyard of Christ during the first centuries, rejoicing over the triumphant death of millions of her children. In the succeeding centuries she admired the wisdom and virtues of the Holy Fathers; she witnessed the downfall of the Roman Empire under the repeated

onslaughts of barbarous pagan nations, and these — heirs of the fallen Empire—she again led to Christ. She issued triumphantly from the struggle against heresy and infidelity, and rejoicing over the discovery of new countries, she sent her best sons, who gained to Christ the savage hunters of the primitive forests, and brought to the wild sons of the American plains the blessings and graces of their spiritual Mother in Europe. She maintains in our days the claims of Christ and of justice against modern paganism and tyranny. The Church is the sun of time, shining through all ages, and accompayning the nations in their course through history; she will send forth her light to the consummation of the world. Mt. xxviii, 20; Mt. xvi, 18.

II. Our Holy Church has remained unchanged during all this length of time; not one particle of her deposit of faith has been lost. She administers the seven sacraments, glorifies God by the same holy sacrifice, and has always been governed by her bishops united with the Supreme Pastor in Rome. She preaches the same faith and morals to the nations and their rulers, be it acceptable or not. With youthful freshness and vigor she has marched through varying times at the side of nations, which she saw rise and fall, calling forth new life in the midst of ruins. She has always resembled and still resembles her divine Master, Who was yesterday, is to-day, and will be to-morrow, Who will sit at the right of His Father—world without end. Oh! it is so consoling to see the Church clad in the variegated garment of the nations of East and West, of North and South, full of life and vigor, encompassed by thousands of ruins, which are still the admiration of mankind.

III. No other religious bodies can claim the catholicity of time. We know the hour of their unhappy birth, and the names of their Apostate founders. Tertullian said to the heretics of his days: "You are later than we, for which reason your religion is false."

Being the children of time, they necessarily bore the characteristics of their Mother: changeableness and death. Either such innovations in religion disappeared like smoke, or they were so changed as not to resemble their originals.

It is a shuffling evasion to say that the Church is invisible, and that there were holy men in all ages, who, struggling against corruption, constituted this invisible Church. How, for the sake of reason, can Christ's Church be invisible? And what right have their tongues to brand holy men with hypocrisy, as they continued to belong to a church which they thought to have forfeited the claim of a divine origin?

PART II.

OUR HOLY CHURCH IS CATHOLIC IN REGARD TO PLACE.

I. She was the most widely spread in all ages, and the number of her members exceeds the members of all other religious communities. No country is without Catholic churches. Europe is mostly Catholic. Notwithstanding the heresy of the sixteenth century and the storms of revolution, France, Belgium, Ireland, Spain, Portugul, Austria and the South of Germany are either exclusively or mostly Catholic. In Switzerland, the Netherlands, in the North of Germany and in England, our Church makes rapid progress. In Poland, Russia, Sweden, Norway and Denmark the most cruel persecutions have not succeeded in extirpating the Catholic faith. South and Central America are Catholic; and the growth of catholicity in the United States reminds us of the first Christian centuries.

II. All the other Christian communities do not even pretend to be Catholic. Those of the East amount to seventy-five millions, but are divided into various sects; the Protestants, the heretics of the West, amount to eighty-five millions, and are also divided into numerous different denominations. The Catholic Church numbers more than two hundred millions.

III. The Catholic Church sends her missionaries into every country, and they convert millions every year. The Old Schismatics do not pretend to make converts, unless one might call the partial perversion of unhappy Poland by brutal Russian force a conversion. There are Protestant ministers in heathen countries for the purpose of evangelization, but, according to their own testimony, without apparent result. Like the hereties in the times of Tertullian, they do not like to convert the heathens, but to

pervert the Catholics. They can destroy, but they can not build up.

*Peroration:* There are millions yet living in darkness. They must be converted. Messengers of the Catholic Church are at work in every corner of the world. Would you not like to join in their holy work? You can join it by ardent and regular prayers and by contributing toward the support of the missions among the Gentiles.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## KINDNESS OF THE DIVINE SHEPHERD.

Jesus being the Supreme Good, is most amiable, most worthy of all love. "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men." Ps. xliv. Moreover, He is most kind and benignant towards all of us, and therefore we are in gratitude bound to love Him in return. How great His love is toward His sheep, we are taught by to-day's Gospel.

### I. HE FEEDS HIS SHEEP IN THE MOST FRUITFUL PASTURES.

As a shepherd who visits His sheep and feeds them in rich pastures, He was foretold by the prophets. See the beautiful passage, Ezech. xxxiv, 11 ff.: Jesus feeds His flock

1. By His doctrine, leading *a.* by His word the good sheep, and *b.* seeking those which are scattered. See Lk. xv, 4 ff.

2. By His grace, *a.* rendering His sheep willing to follow Him, and *b.* laying the feeble ones upon His shoulders rejoicing. When Moses was feeding the sheep in the desert, the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush, inflaming him for his new calling. Likewise the Lord descends into our hearts in time of solitude, enkindling them by His grace with the flames of love.

3. By nourishing them with His flesh and blood unto life everlasting. This most tender union of the soul with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is prefigured by the little lamb of the poor man, which, as Nathan said to David, was "eating of his

bread, and drinking of his cup, and sleeping in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter." II Kings xii, 3.

II. HE PROTECTS HIS SHEEP.

David, the shepherd of Bethlehem, and a figure of Christ (Ezech. xxxiv, 23)—strangled a lion and a bear who had taken a ram out of the midst of his flock. I Kings xvii, 34. In like manner Jesus protects His sheep

1. Against the lion—Satan who, as a "roaring lion, goeth about seeking to devour" us. I Pet. v, 8. For He has *a.* conquered Satan, *b.* taught us to resist him, "sober, watching, strong in faith" l. c.,

2. Against the bear—our own flesh. For as the bear is fond of honey, so is our flesh of worldly luxuries. Jesus assists us in mortifying our flesh, *a.* by His example, *b.* by His word, *c.* by His grace.

3. Against the wolf, *i. e.*, the world. *a.* Jesus Himself compares the world to a wolf. "Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves." Mt. x, 16. *b.* The world resembles the wolf in its rapacity and cruelty. *c.* Jesus conquered the world; in Him we can also conquer.

III. HE KNOWS HIS SHEEP.

That is to say, He acknowledges them to be His own. Under what conditions are we His? Jesus Himself says: "Mine know Me." He knows us if we know Him:

1. By the eye of our soul, by true faith, for "he that believeth not shall be condemned." Mk. xvi, 16, Cf. Heb. xi, 6.

2. By hearing. "They shall hear My voice." It is, therefore, a distinguishing mark of the sheep of Christ, a sign of predestination, to hear and keep the divine word, which is heard *a.* mediately—by the Word of God preached by the pastors of our souls; *b.* immediately—as the voice of the Divine Shepherd speaking through our conscience.

3. By their conduct. Good sheep will follow their shepherd, not the allurements of thieves. As the spotted sheep belonged to Jacob, the black to Laban, so those who shine with

various virtues belong to Jesus, while those who are black by their dark and sinful deeds belong to Satan.

IV. HE GATHERS HIS SHEEP.

Whilst the wolf only robs and scatters, the particular kindness of the good Shepherd is manifested by His efforts in gathering and uniting. He gathers His sheep

1. In this world *a.* by calling them to the unity of faith. How anxious He was for this unity, may be seen from His fervent prayer "for those who through their word shall believe in Me, that they all may be one." John xvii, 20, 21. *b.* To the unity of charity which He declared to be the mark of His disciples. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another." John xiii, 35.

2. At the judgment—when He will gather together the elect from all parts, and set the sheep on his right, and when there will be no separation any more.

3. In heaven—where He had left the ninety-nine just, *i. e.*, the hosts of angels, to seek the lost human family, which He will embody forever in the nine choirs of angels, so that there may be, in the eminent and full sense of the word, "one fold and one shepherd."

V. HE GIVES HIS LIFE FOR HIS SHEEP.

This is the greatest proof of His love, for "greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John xv, 13. Jesus gave His life

1. As the price of our redemption. Call to mind

*a.* How great that price is (I Cor. vi, 20), that you may judge of His infinite love, the value of your soul, of grace and glory.

*b.* How great is the wickedness of him that would despise this price! He that refuses to his servant his annual wages commits a crime crying to heaven. Now Jesus Christ has become a servant for us for thirty-three years, and for His wages desires to possess our dearly bought souls. Would it not be a crime, crying loudly to heaven, to refuse His request.

2. As a proof of His love. If it is the greatest proof of

love to die for one's friend, who then can measure the depth of love in him who dies for his enemy? Verily, Jesus is the true Jonas who desired to be cast into the sea in order to save His enemies.

3. Exhorting us by His death to return His love

*a.* By gratefully remembering His death. "Forget not the kindness of thy surety; for He has given His life for thee." Jesus was our security amid great sacrifices.

*b.* By following Jesus Christ so as to be ready to give even our lives for Him and for our neighbor. "I will lay down my life for Thee," said Peter. John xiii, 37. We should say the same with him. And "in this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." I John iii, 16.

St. Bonaventura.

## Third Sunday After Easter.

### I.

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ALONE IS HOLY.

"A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." John xvi, 21. Our mother, the Church, has to bring forth children, not into the world, but into heaven, by regenerating and sanctifying them in great pains and labors, and it is for this reason that we claim for her, and for her only, the mark of sanctity. By these words I have indicated the subject of my present discourse. I will prove that our Church is Holy, and holy to the exclusion of all other Christian communities.

PART I.

It is not necessary to prove that the true Church of Christ *must* be holy. She is the bride of the Son of God, the "Lamb unspotted and undefiled;" it is her destiny and calling to lead her children to sanctity. It was for this that our Saviour prayed immediately before His Sacred Passion. John xvii, 15-17. Now, that our Church is holy, becomes evident from these observations.

I. Her founder is holy, Jesus Christ, the Holy of Holies. His holy spirit is to sanctify His Church to the consummation of the world. Such is His promise. That Jesus is her founder is evident from the fact that our Church alone traces her history back to the day of Pentecost.

II. All doctrines of our Church tend to holiness. They are stars shining in the dark night of our temporal life, and pointing out to us a better world to come. She holds up to us the perfections of God for our imitation. She maintains the faith in a Triune God, and the divinity of Jesus Christ. She preaches the corruption of man in consequence of original sin, and the necessity of subjecting the flesh with its concupiscences

to the control of the soul. She promises to the just the everlasting joys of heaven, and threatens the wicked with the everlasting pains of hell, whilst her doctrine on purgatory warns us to avoid even the smallest sins and imperfections. She has maintained the indissolubility of matrimony against tyrants, and by so doing she has kept up the bulwark of public morality and safety. And she does not pretend to teach the word of man, but as infallible interpreter of Him Who said: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii, 12.

III. All her precepts are exhortations to work out our salvation. By obliging us to submit to her doctrines, she crushes our intellectual pride and fosters humility, the foundation of the edifice of virtues. She teaches the love of our neighbor, and by inculcating the beauty of the evangelical counsels, she presents to us many of her children as living models of heroic Christian charity. By her many exhortations to penance and mortification, she obliges and encourages us to struggle against ourselves, *i. e.*, against our worst enemies, our sinful passions. Indeed, the Catholic Church may challenge all mankind in relation to each of her precepts: "If any man will do the will (of this precept), he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be from God." John vii, 17.

IV. The seven holy Sacraments which she administers, are, not to mention the graces conferred by them, natural guides to sanctity. This assertion may be illustrated by the necessity of confession, which implies *a.* self-knowledge, acquired by the examination of conscience; *b.* contrition, *c.* trust in God, *d.* humility, without which you can never make your confession.

V. If the true Church of Christ is provided with the means of sanctifying her children, this sanctity must be manifested in their lives. "By their fruits you shall know them." Mt. vii, 16. And these fruits of holiness are, indeed, produced. I could refer to the fact that beings (Indians) resembling rather wild beasts than rational creatures, were converted into true Christians; that the Romans, the Greeks, etc., despairing of

humanity, were converted into Saints. But to be brief, I will call your attention to the millions of Saints to whose sanctity God Himself has borne witness by incontestable miracles. There is no country, no sex, no state of life, which has not had its Saints. We know of holy popes, bishops, priests, and laymen, of holy monks and nuns, of Saints who attained the highest degree of perfection in every-day life. And in our present century two hundred persons have been either canonized, or the process of their canonization has been inaugurated.

But are there not abuses in the Church, and do not many Catholics lead a scandalous life? Undoubtedly. But does not our Lord compare His kingdom to a field where wheat and cockle grow together? Were not in St. Peter's net fish of different size and quality?

PART II.

EVERY OTHER RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY FORFEITED THE TITLE OF HOLINESS.

I. Their founders are not holy. Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Henry VIII, etc.

II. Their doctrines are not holy. The so-called Reformers of the Sixteenth Century—did they not deny to man the liberty of his will? Did they not assert that grace performs all in us? Did they not impute, at least indirectly, to God the authorship of sin? Is it not a lamentable fact that the Protestantism of our days does no longer uphold the divinity of Jesus Christ? The eternity of the pains of hell, etc.?

III. If the foundation of faith be shaken, the principles of morality are of necessity affected by it. Fortunately, many naturally good people, adhering to Protestantism, follow the law inscribed in their hearts. Nevertheless, the doctrines of the Reformers caused sad havoc among the morals of their followers. The penitential works of olden times were rebuked as irrational, the Evangelical counsels were ridiculed; good works proscribed as useless, and even as detrimental. Justification by faith alone caused at least indifference to a moral life.

IV. Most of the holy sacraments are discarded, and the two or three that have been retained, are mere signs and ceremonies, not means of grace.

V. Therefore, there are no Saints outside of our Church. "Are grapes gathered from the thorns, or figs from the thistles?" No Saints, whose sanctity God Himself witnessed, according to His own explicit promise: "And these signs shall follow them that believe," etc. Mk. xvi, 17, 18.

*Peroration:* Let us be holy children of our Holy Mother. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Mt. v, 17. Every sin of a Catholic Christian is so much more abominable, as it is a stain on his Church.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## THOUGHTS OF CONSOLATION IN AFFLICTION.

While the Christian dwells on earth, he has to suffer. For it is to all of us that the Saviour said: "You shall lament and weep." But to-day's Gospel shows us temporal tribulations in a light different from that of the world and our own reason. For whilst the world declares him unhappy, Jesus calls the suffering Christian blessed. Indeed there are very consoling arguments to show us that temporal trials and sufferings may be rendered light and even sweet. They are the following:

### I. THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME.

"Here we have no permanent city, but we seek one to come," (Heb. xiii, 14) and we know that we shall receive from God "a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven." II Cov. v, 1. Therefore, we should look upon the world in this way:

1. Nothing in the world is ours, therefore a Christian should not care much for the happiness of this world.

2. Everything is of short duration and perishable.

*a.* Earthly happiness.

*b.* Tribulation, which is often succeeded by joy in this life ("a little while," etc.) or will be turned into joy after this short life ("a little while"), wherefore our present tribulation is called "momentary and light" II Cor. iv, 17, "a little while," in to-day's Gospel.

II. OUR SORROW SHALL BE TURNED INTO JOY—IF NOT INTO TEMPORAL, AT LEAST INTO ETERNAL JOY.

1. God has ordained that those who suffer with Christ, shall reign with Him. A faithful saying: "For if we be dead with Him, we shall live also with Him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." II Tim. ii, 11, 12. "Rejoice, being partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that when His joy shall be revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy." I Pet. iv, 13.

2. Suffering with Christ and for His sake is to carry the cross imposed by God on our shoulders, and such tribulation affords us great internal joy. "Our present tribulation, which is momentary and light, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory." II Cor. iv, 17. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Ps. cxxv, 5.

3. The world, then, is badly deceived in shunning tribulations and afflictions, and esteeming riches a great blessing. "Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy life time." Lk. xvi, 25. "Blessed are ye who weep now, for you shall rejoice."

4. Therefore, rejoice over your tribulations; all afflictions will be far excelled by their reward. "For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us." Rom. viii, 18.

III. TEMPORAL AFFLICTIONS ARE TO OUR ADVANTAGE.

1. They give control over the flesh and protect against sin.

*a.* Man, when in prosperity, is very prone to forget God. "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them." Prov. i, 32. "Behold, this was the iniquity of Sodom, pride," etc. Ezech. xvi, 49 ff. cf. Deut. xxxii, 15.

*b.* In the time of distress—you then remember God. "The afflictions of an hour maketh one forget great delights." Eccles. xi, 29.

2. They strengthen man's spiritual life, his devotion, confidence in God, etc. Those who labor, enjoy the blessing of greater strength and better health than those who lead an idle life; in the same way the afflicted in regard to the spiritual life.

IV. CHRIST IS OUR MODEL IN SUFFERING.

1. Let us suffer after the example of Jesus Christ:

*a.* The innocent One suffered for our sins; how much more should we suffer for our own sins?

*b.* The only begotten Son of God suffered. If we suffer with patience, we prove ourselves worthy children of God." "The Lord scourges every son whom He receiveth." Heb. xii, 6.

*c.* Christ—with His Saints—ought to have suffered these things, and so enter into His glory. Lk. xxiv, 26. We must follow Him walking the same thorny path, which may be hard to our flesh, but "if any man will follow Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." Mk. viii, 34. "In the world you shall have distress: but have confidence; I have overcome the world." John xvi, 33.

2. Let us suffer with patience what God sends daily. The Christian does not need to seek sufferings, they come uncalled. "Another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not." John xxi, 18.

*Peroration:* God grant us a patient heart, that we may through tribulations joyfully enter with Christ and all the Elect into everlasting glory and happiness.

Michael Helding, Bishop of Merseburg, † 1562.

## Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph.

### THE GRANDEUR OF ST. JOSEPH.

The words (Eccles. xliv, 20): "There was not found the like to him in glory," though applied to Abraham, the great Father, may with more reason be applied to his son Joseph. For as guardian of the living Manna, he is both the father of the whole human family, and the foster-father of the Son of God. As such, he appears to us as a giant of virtue, being in every respect in his outward and inward life, for contemplative as well as for daily life, our most perfect, and yet the most simple model. Now then, in order to promote, in a compliance with the aim of the Church, the veneration and imitation of St. Joseph, we propose to reflect on his exalted greatness.—St. Joseph was a great Saint.

#### PART I.

#### DWELLING WITH JESUS AND MARY, HE WAS GREAT AS TO HIS INTERIOR LIFE.

St. Joseph was great:

I. By the abundance of his virtues. "What you are in the sight of God, that you are and no more." (St. Francis of Sales.) Now, by God only interior sanctity and virtuousness are esteemed. "Truly great is he that possesses great charity." (Thomas a'Kemp.) St. Joseph possessed this abundance of charity. "He was just," Mt. i, 19, *i. e.*, he possessed all virtues (charity in its broadest meaning).

II. Being the bridegroom, spouse and real husband of the Mother of God, he was greater in virtue than other Saints.

1. Such he was in accordance with the law, which prescribed that the daughters inheriting their father's property should be married to men of their own tribe and family (Numb. xxxvi, 6). Joseph and Mary belonged to the same family of David.

2. In a more sublime sense, protecting in Mary, as in himself, the most spotless virginity. "God gave Adam a wife quite

similar to him, likewise He gave to the Blessed Virgin a spouse quite similar to her." St. Petrus Dam.

3. Let us conclude from this,

*a.* How great must have been the virtuousness of St. Joseph, to whom it was given to comprehend this word, before it was announced by the Son of God, afterwards committed to his care, (Mt. xix, 11,) contracting a virginal matrimony, and by his own virginity rendering himself worthy of the Virgin Mary. For "a good wife is a good portion; she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds." Eccles. xxvi, 4.

*b.* What is the foundation of a happy marriage? The same faith, the same firm hope in God, the same burning zeal for God's honor, the same love of a retired life, of praying and working, are the firmest bonds between husband and wife, as they were between Joseph and Mary. Let there be one spirit, one heart, one mind, one life.

4. Let us imitate the virginity of St. Joseph, at least by a spiritual virginity

*a.* Consisting in a separation from the world, from sensuality, from men, by self-denial and freedom from worldly desires. This separation can take place in the midst of the world.

*b.* A chaste and holy union will be the happy result. Man, by being separated from creatures, finds God; by strippin ghimself of terrestrial things, he comes in possession of celestial things; by dying to the world, he gains life everlasting. May St. Joseph, by his intercession obtain us this true liberty and inward purity!

III. By His conversation with Jesus, being His foster-father,

1. The just man is "like a tree which is planted near the running waters, which shall bring forth its fruit in due season." Joseph being a just man, was a sound tree planted at the source of the Living Water. How abundant and precious must have been his fruit!

2. Sinners, by approaching Jesus and conversing with Him only for a short time, were entirely changed. So Zacheus (Lk.

xix, 2 ff.), so Magdalene (Lk. vii, 37). How great must have been the effects produced on Joseph in consequence of His intimate conversation with Jesus for so many years!

3. Saints, from seeing Jesus in ecstasy, perceived the most wonderful changes in their souls, ex. g. St. Therese, when she saw Jesus the first time. Joseph, being with Jesus and seeing Him at his side, must have experienced a continual growth in virtue.

PART II.

LIVING FOR JESUS AND MARY, HE WAS GREAT BY HIS DEEDS.

I. As protector of the good name of Mary and the honor of the Son of God. The hard-hearted Jews would not have believed in her conceiving of the Holy Ghost. Joseph protected her good name and at the same time the honor of her God, not like an attorney with many words, but by his whole life, amid great pains and cares, trials and hard work.

II. As foster-father of God's Son. He not only knew the mysteries of God, but helped in carrying them out, fostering—he the second spouse, as he was, of the Blessed Virgin—the Sacred Body framed in the womb of the Virgin by the First Spouse, the Holy Ghost. You may measure the exalted dignity of this vocation

1. From the depth of the humiliation of Jesus in His Incarnation, by which He was made to the likeness of men, yet without sin (Phil. ii, 6, etc.; Heb. iv, 15). In proportion to the humiliation of the Son of God is exalted the position of him who took care of the divine child. As foster-father of the Son of God Joseph was the householder of God. "Constituet eum Dominum domus suae." With Jesus the humble house at Nazareth was truly a house of God, the Lord of which was Joseph. Moreover, St. Joseph co-operated in the work of our Salvation, since to his care He was committed, Who is the Foundation of our Salvation. For "no one can lay another foundation, but that which is laid: which is Christ Jesus," Cor. iii, 11.

2. From the liberality of Jesus towards those from whom He received favors. It is for their hospitality that He "loved

Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus." John xi, 5. He rewarded Veronica's charitable act by His own picture; He rewarded the Samaritan woman for a drink of water by making Himself known to her. He rewarded Simon of Cyrene, by leading him and his sons Alexander and Rufus to the faith. What value then had the many charitable acts of Joseph who lived only for Jesus and Mary?

III. By being faithful in little things, which is the true greatness in the life of Joseph. The extraordinary works in the lives of the Saints are more God's doing than their own. So was Joseph's life a chain of little things, by the faithful performance of which he ascended to the summit of perfection. Let us herein follow St. Joseph. For, (1) few are able to do great things, whilst the beggar can be faithful in little things. (2) Why should we not do for the love of our great God what is easily done? (3) Little things are important also: David's look on Bethsabee; the affection of Judas for money; the spark of charity towards the poor grew in St. Francis Ass. to a mighty fire of divine love, etc.

*Peroration:* Let us often contemplate the life of St. Joseph, that we may imitate him in his faithfulness and purity; let us recommend ourselves to his intercession, that we may be once deigned worthy of hearing the word from the lips of the Lord: "Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Mt. xxv, 23.

Sartori.

## Fourth Sunday After Easter.

### I.

### ON THE APOSTOLICITY OF THE CHURCH.

What the Holy Ghost was to the Apostles, He is and will be to the Church of Christ to the consummation of the world; her comfort and teacher, the invisible Pilot who leads the ship of salvation through the turbulent waves of time. But now the question arises: Where, in which community, does the Holy Ghost abide and perform this work? Our Saviour promised the Holy Ghost to His Apostles only. It is to them only that He said: "If I go, I will send Him to you." John xvi, 7. It is on the Apostles that He breathed, and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John xx, 22. It is the Apostles who, being conscious of possessing the Holy Ghost, imparted Him to those who were baptized. Act. viii, 17. Consequently, there is no Church that can rightfully boast of possessing the Holy Ghost but she that has come down directly from the Apostles, through the uninterrupted succession of her bishops, and for this reason has a claim to style herself "Apostolic."

I. There is no reason, then, to be surprised that Apostolicity was always considered a true, convincing, and plain mark of the Church of Christ. I invite your attention to this mark of the Church, for the clearer explanation of which I will expound these two points: 1. Our Church has the right of styling herself Apostolic. 2. She has the *exclusive* right to this title.

#### PART I.

#### OUR CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC.

There is no legal power in the Church unless it be conferred by Jesus Christ. "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth." Mt. xxviii, 18. In virtue of this power Christ sends His Apostles to teach all nations. And that they may be enabled to teach all nations effectually, He will protect them against erroneous doctrines: "Behold, I am with you all days," not

only for three or four centuries, but "to the consummation of the world." "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." John xx, 21. Consequently he that can not trace back his power to the Apostles, has no such right in the Church.

1. Moreover, we are told that the Apostles conferred their power upon others. Mathias "was numbered with the eleven Apostles." Act. i, 26. The Apostles praying imposed hands upon the seven who were chosen deacons. Act. vi, 6. When Paul and Barnabas were elected by the Holy Ghost for the work of the ministry, the Apostles "fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away." Act. xiii, 3; Cf. I Tim. iv, 14. There is not one instance in Holy Scripture to prove that any one, without the imposition of hands by the Apostles, partook of the apostolic power.

2. It is self-evident that no one can assume the power of the Apostles. There is no organized social body where the officers would confer upon themselves the authoritative powers.

II. The bishops of the Catholic Church are the successors of the Apostles.

1. The Pope is the successor of St. Peter, the head of the Church. It follows that the Roman See is Apostolic. Consequently, all the Sees in union with the Roman See are Apostolic. For all are built upon the rock of the Church, and recognized as parts of the true Church. And there is no bishop of the Catholic Church who could be a bishop unless recognized as such by the Apostolic See. If the root is Apostolic, the whole tree is Apostolic.

2. If you consult history, it teaches you that the various branches of the Catholic Church have been founded either by Apostles or by men sent by the successor of St. Peter, or at least by successors of other Apostles. St. James Major is the founder of the Church in Spain, St. Remigius planted the cross in France, St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, made three wearisome journeys to Rome to ask the mission and benediction of the Pope. St. Augustine was sent by Pope Gregory to the Anglo-Saxons; St. Patrick to Ireland with the blessing of the

Pope; St. Columban to the Scotch; St. Ansgar to the inhabitants of Denmark; St. Otto to the Pomeranians, Wedes and Slaves, etc. Every bishop can trace his predecessors back to an Apostle.

PART II.

ALL THE OTHER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES ARE NOT APOSTOLIC.

I. As regards them, we know the time of their apostacy from our Church; we know the men by whose influence this separation was commenced and accomplished; we know the pretexts of this separation. It is a building different from that built by Jesus Christ, who says to them: "I know you not." Mt. xxv, 12.

We may repeat to all of them the words of Tertullian: "Where do you come from? When did you come to light? Where did you hide so long? Up to this time we did not hear of you." And the words of St. Hilarius: "You came too late. * * * The wheat was sown and came up before the cockle." Or the words of St. Jerome: "Why do you come after four hundred years? Without your doctrine the world has been Christian up to this day. We must stay in the Church that was founded by the Apostles."

II. No other Christian denomination can boast of having successors of the Apostles for bishops. Who gave those who founded a new church their authority? Not the successors of the Apostles, from whom they were separated. Did they prove their mission by miracles? St. Xavier, a member of our church, though legally sent, proved by miracles his mission to the Gentiles, whilst Luther, Henry VIII, and others were tyrannizing the people.

III. With the separation from the One Apostolic Church all stability of doctrine was lost. If one man had the right to follow his caprices, everybody would possess the same right. Hence the dissolution of Protestantism into countless sects, which certainly is not a mark of the One Apostolic Church.

IV. The founders of new religions justified their separation by the assertion that corruption and abuses in the Church

were intolerable. We give them the answer: 1. These abuses are exaggerated. 2. Who authorized them to define what are abuses? If things should go on in that way, every individual could proclaim himself sovereign master of divine revelation.

*Peroration:* We boast of the Apostolicity of the Church. It is the book of the generation of the Church. Those communities which are separated from us can never claim this mark of Apostolicity. With the Apostolic Fathers we say to them: "You are new comers, you are innovators, you are not Apostolic, and therefore your faith is false, is a swindle, is a fraud on the records." But as for us, dearly beloved, knowing that the Apostolicity of our Holy Church is founded on the Apostolic See, let us adhere to this foundation-stone laid by Jesus Christ Himself.

Joseph Ehrler.

## II.
## HOMILY.

Jesus intended by the words of to-day's Gospel to soothe the sorrow of His disciples at His coming Passion and Death. It is for this purpose that He speaks to them of His ascension into heaven.

### PART I.

### EXPLANATION OF THE GOSPEL.

I. Jesus dwells on the subject of His ascension, by which He was to be glorified after His death and resurrection. "Now I go (by ascending into heaven) to Him that sent Me." The splendor of this ascension will be so great that no one will again ask Me: "Whither goest Thou?" For they will see Him ascending, and wish to gain the same glory.

II. Jesus promises to send to them the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete: "But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go."

1. By the ascension of Christ the coming of the Paraclete was made possible: "If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you."

The reason was, because, as long as the disciples conversed with their Master, they had no desire for heavenly gifts, according to Mt. vi, 21: "Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also." But since they had seen Jesus ascending into heaven, they mourned no more over His death, but "went back to Jerusalem with great joy, and they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God." Lk. xxiv, 52.

2. Jesus explains the object for which the Paraclete will be sent.

*a.* He will, after banishing all fear of men from the hearts of the Apostles, encourage them to battle against the moral corruption of the world. Therefore, He will convince the world

1. Of sin, "because they have not believed in Me." Infidelity is the root of all vices, and "he that doth not believe is already judged: because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John, iii, 18, whilst the just shall live in his faith. Habac. ii, 4.

2. Of justice, "because I go to the Father, and you shall see Me no longer."

*a.* The justice of the disciples consisted in their faith and the profession of their faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ, and in their love of Him who had disappeared from them. The justice of every faithful man is the same. And if the infidels are not willing to believe the same doctrine, they are convinced of their guilt and injustice by the faith of the believers, and by comparison with them reprehended as damnable.

3. "And of judgment; because the prince of this world is already judged." Jesus Himself has judged Satan by casting out devils and giving the same power to His disciples. Now, if you are deterred from evil deeds by the discomfiture of this reprobate spirit, the world is convinced of the judgment that was passed against him. "And the angels, who kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Jud. vi.

*a.* He will teach you all truth * * * and the things

that are to come, He will show you." In this way they are able and efficient, because infallible, heralds of God.—"He will glorify Me," because the Apostles, filled with the Holy Ghost, will preach the word of God without fear (Act. iv, 31,) and convert the world to the faith in Christ.

*b.* The nature of the Paraclete is expressed by the words: "He shall receive of mine," etc. Consequently the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

PART II.

APPLICATION OF THE GOSPEL TO OUR LIFE.

I. Jesus returned to His Father—after having consummated His Passion. "For unto this you have been called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you should follow his steps." I Pet. ii, 21. "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." Act. xiv, 21. Vide I Pet. iv, 12.

II. Jesus, after returning to the Father, would not forsake us, but promised and sent the Holy Ghost. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption." "For the Holy Spirit of discipline will withdraw Himself from the thoughts that are without understanding; and He shall not abide, when iniquity cometh in." Wisd. i, 5. Therefore the Psalmist prays: "Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels." Ps. l, 12.

III. Seek not the things of this world, which the Holy Ghost has convinced of sin, justice and judgment. "Our conversation is in heaven." Philip iii, 20. Seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God," etc. Col. iii, 1 ff.

1. It is for the reason that we should beware of being convinced of infidelity, but give evidence of our faith by our works, for "faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself." James ii, 17-26.

2. Beware of being judged, on the ground of not resembling the just. "The queen of the south shall rise in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them,

because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold more than Solomon here." Lk. xi, 31.

3. Strive to resist the devil, the prince of this world, strong in faith, I Pet. v. 8, that you may not be condemned with him.

IV. Speak truth in your heart, and use not deceit in your tongue, Ps. xiv, 3, that the Spirit of truth lead you unto all truth.

V. In all your actions invoke the grace and help of the Holy Ghost. "Thy good spirit shall lead me into the right land." Since He will show you the things that are to come, He will also discover to your hearts the joys of the future life, and inflame them with the desire for them.

Venerabilis Beda.

## Fifth Sunday After Easter.

### I.

### IN WHAT MANNER WE SHOULD PRAY.

"When Moses lifted up his hands (for prayer) Israel overcame; but if he let them down a little, Amalec overcame." Ex. xvii, 11. Such is the divine disposition. Man can not perform meritorious works without divine assistance, which involves the necessity of prayer. The necessity of prayer has been acknowledged by all nations, however degraded they may have been. Though it is one of the most natural wants, nothing is more rare than a good prayer, acceptable in the sight of God. "You ask and receive not, because you ask amiss." James iv, 3. Lord, teach us how to pray, we may say with the disciples. I will then teach you in the name of God, and as His messenger, how we should perform this most sacred and necessary duty; how we should pray.

PART I.

THE OBJECT TO BE OBTAINED BY PRAYER MUST BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

You expect, perhaps, that I should speak first on devotion as the principal quality of good prayer. But it seems to be evident that a prayer without devotion does not deserve the name, and that to such the reproach of our Lord might be applied: "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." As Abraham, when about to offer the sacrifice, left his wife and servants behind, so must we when about to pray leave behind all worldly thoughts (St. Chrysost.). It is far more necessary to speak to you on the object of prayer.

1. The principal object should not be temporal blessings, as is often the case, but the grace of subduing our passions and progressing in virtue.

2. We must pray with resignation to God's holy will. It often happens that we pray with obstinacy for a certain object,

prescribing to Him what He ought to give us. We assume to draw the plan and outlines of our life, so that our Lord should build by our designs.

3. The object of our prayer should be chiefly the honor of God and the salvation of our souls. Let the Lord's prayer be our model. Our Father who art in heaven. Sursum corda! Hallowed be Thy name! God's holy name, His glory and honor be first on our lips, etc. (The preacher briefly expounds the Lord's Prayer.)

4. We are not forbidden to pray for temporal blessings, but it should be done in subordination to God's honor, and the salvation of our soul. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings." Rom. viii, 26.

## PART II.

### WE MUST HAVE A FIRM CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

1. Jesus required confidence (faith) of every one that asked a grace or favor of Him. He went so far as to say: "Amen I say to you, that whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not stagger in his heart, * * it shall be done for him. Therefore I say to you, all things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive, and they shall come unto you." Mk. xi, 23, 24. "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you might say to this mulberry tree: Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou transplanted into the sea, and it should obey you." Lk. xvii, 6.

2. Our confidence is founded on God's almighty power, wisdom and bounty. Like three bright stars shine His omnipotence, to which nothing is impossible or difficult; His wisdom, which disposes all things, and His bounty, to which His omnipotence and wisdom always yield. Our confidence is founded on the divine promises, on the voice of the sacred blood of Christ, and on an experience of thousands of years, and on the experience of our own life.

3. We must not become discouraged, if God either refuses or defers granting our petition. We either know not what is good for us, or our Lord intends to perfect our virtue by forcing us to perseverance in praying. "For which thing I thrice besought the Lord, that it might depart from me. And He said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee; for power is made perfect in infirmity." II Cor. xii, 8, 9. The blind man sitting by the wayside, though rebuked by many, cried out repeatedly: "Son of David, have mercy on me," and Jesus healed him. The five prudent virgins who were not tired of waiting for the bridegroom, were admitted, while the five foolish ones, who fell asleep, were not known by Him.

"You have set a time for the mercy of the Lord, and you have appointed Him a day, according to your pleasure," said Judith to the inhabitants of Bethulia, who would give up their city if no help would come from God within five days. Do not follow them.

## PART III.

### WE MUST PRAY WITH A PURE HEART.

God will not grant the petition of a soul in the state of sin.

1. Such is the teaching of Holy Scripture. "When you multiply prayer, I will not hear; for your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves, be clean. * * Learn to do well, * * and then come." Is. i, 15-18. "Behold, the hand of the Lord is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have divided between you and your God." Is. lix, 1, 2. St. John writes: "Dearly beloved, if our heart do not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God, and whatsoever we shall ask we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." I John iii, 21, 22.

2. Every sin is a rebellion against God. How can a rebel expect to be graciously heard, whilst he remains a rebel? Sin is a contempt of Christ's redemption, a renewal of His crucifixion. Will the Father listen to the prayers of him that offends

and despises His Son's tears and blood? Every mortal sin causes an immense gap between God and the sinner! His prayer will die away in this immense gap.

3. God holds out the most magnificent promises to our prayers, if we pray in the name of His Son, as members of His mystical body, for then it is the spirit of Jesus Christ who prays in us. "Because you are sons, God hath sent the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father." Gal. iv, 6; Cf. John xvi, 23. But this communion with Jesus Christ is dissolved by sin. Therefore, being a dry branch of the vine, Jesus Christ, the sinner prays in his own name. Now, then, whoever is not clean of heart, let him pray: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. From all sin deliver us, O Lord. From Thy wrath deliver us, O Lord!" I do not mean, however, to say that the prayer of the sinner is quite useless, but only, that the sinner has no claim to be graciously heard.

## PART IV.

### OUR PRAYER IS SO MUCH BETTER WHEN SUPPORTED BY GOOD WORKS.

1. "Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold," etc., said the Angel to Tobias. Tob. xii, 8. Correlius in Cesarea was heard, because "he feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Act. x, 2. God sent His angel to announce to him: "Thy prayers and thy alms have ascended for a memorial in the sight of God." V, 4.

2. Indeed, by uniting good works with our prayer, the visible sacrifice is united with the invisible sacrifice of the faculties of our soul. Every visible sacrifice involves a self-denial, a mortification, and a victory over our own passions of covetousness, sloth, etc. It was from this conviction that Jews as well as Gentiles offered sacrifices, in order to implore the help of their true or imaginary deity. Therefore, come not with empty hands, but imitate the Wise Men of the East, who appeared with precious gifts before the crib of our Saviour.

*Peroration:* Exhortation to frequent the church, and to pray there fervently. The church is the house of God, where He distributes His graces; it is the tabernacle of God amongst men, where Emmanuel, the God in our flesh, dwelleth in the Blessed Sacrament; the Son of God, in Whose name we must pray.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## WHY WE OBTAIN SO LITTLE BY OUR PRAYERS.

What is the cause of our prayers being so often in vain? Not so much the object of our prayer, for Jesus Himself assures us: "All things whatsoever you ask when ye pray, believe that you shall receive, and they shall come unto you." Mk. xi, 24. Nor is it, principally, the unworthiness of him that prays, for "everyone that asketh, receiveth." Lk. xi, 10. Nor is God fatigued by our being importunate. He exhorts us to be so. We obtain so little by our prayers, first, because we ask for so few and often trifling things, and, secondly, because our prayers for these few and trifling things are not urgent enough.

### PART I.

### WE ASK FOR TOO FEW AND TRIFLING THINGS.

Prayer is an act of divine service, "the best and holiest sacrifice," according to Clement Alex., and as John Damasc. says: "Prayer is a petition to God for proper things." But it often resembles the sacrifice of Cain, since we ask for things unworthy of God, when we

I. Ask for temporal blessings only, such as wealth, health, honor, success of our undertakings. Take into consideration:

1. Of how little value are earthly goods according to the teachings of Jesus! He made little of them at all times, and endeavored to turn the heart of man from them.

2. How unworthy of God is a prayer for such things! Such petitions should be a proof of our being convinced of God's bounty and love! What did goods of this kind cost Him?

Does He not give them even to His enemies—without being asked for them?

3. Jesus, by shedding His precious blood, has obtained infinitely greater goods for us. It is for them that He desires to inflame our hearts. It would be a great offense to ask Him, who invites you to a grand feast, for common food. Who would blame a great man for refusing to grant such a request?

4. The words: "All things whatsoever you ask," etc., Mk. xi, 24, should exhort us not to ask for little, or unworthy things, but for the most precious goods.

II. Or when we ask for temporal blessings in the first place, inverting the order established by Christ. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be *added* unto you." Mt. vi, 33.

1. To observe the above order, is the necessary condition for obtaining things of less value. Solomon asked for wisdom, and God gave him riches and glory besides.

2. To neglect this order is the cause of our prayer not being heard, so that God *a.* refuses to give us temporal goods, because only supernatural graces are worthy of His bounty, and we need grace, in order to make temporal goods conducive to our salvation; and *b.* refuses to deliver us from temporal evils, because our secret evils are much greater, and temporal evils are very wholesome for us, that we may obtain the virtues we are in need of. Poverty fosters humility; calumny protects you against love of the world; sickness against sensuality.

Alms, fasting, prayers and Holy Masses for the conversion of sinners, patience, moderate, and well-regulated love of creatures, would secure us the object of our prayer, and temporal blessings also.

3. The right manner of asking temporal benefits would be *a.* to add the condition: provided, that its granting is not contrary to God's honor and the welfare of my soul; and *b.* to ask for temporal and spiritual benefits at the same time, ex. g. You ask for riches, but ask for contempt of riches, too; ask for deliverance from poverty, and for love of poverty; for health, and for patience in case of sickness.

PART II.

OUR PRAYERS ARE NOT FERVENT.

St. Chrysostom once reproached his hearers with praying in such a manner, as if they had nothing to expect from God's bounty. Our cold prayers are deserving of the same reproach. If you want to move the heart of your God, you must pray:

I. With *fervor*, *i. e.*, have a sincere desire for what you ask.

1. "A great desire is a great noise in the ears of God." St. Aug. "Desiderium pauperum exaudivit Dominus." "I have called upon Thee in the the day of my trouble, because Thou hast heard me." Ps. lxxxv, 7. That we might feel the poverty of our souls as well as temporal poverty!

2. But we are so cold in our prayers, without zeal for supernatural graces, so as to fear almost to be heard, as St. Aug. describes his own state of mind. He feared God might heal him too soon from the disease of his sensuality. And we are thoughtless and distracted. "How can you expect that God should hear you, if you do not hear yourselves." St. Cypr. Every beggar, every child, is your model as for simplicity, confidence, and impetuosity in prayer.

II. You must never get tired of praying. Who tires of praying, is guilty

1. Of a *lack* of *humility*. For it is pride to expect to have your request granted at the very hour of prayer. God resists the proud.

2. Of a *lack* of *confidence*, as the least delay is taken for a refusal.

3. And yet the delay in granting your petition is a disposition of divine wisdom.

*a.* We obtain so much greater blessings and graces. Continued prayer in itself is a great benefit, and if you do not yield to fatigue, God will give you more than you ask for. St. Monica prayed six years for the conversion of her son. She prayed that he might become a Christian, and he became a bishop; that he might live in conjugal chastity, and he followed the evangel-

ical council; that he might leave heresy, and he became a doctor of the Church, and the scourge of heretics.

*b.* Our heart is inflamed more and more, as it was the case with the woman of Chanaan. Mt. xv, 22, ff. Let us not desist from praying, let us overcome the Lord by our faith, that it be done to us, as we will. V. 28.

P. Claudius de la Colombiére's sermon delivered in London at the palace of St. James, A. D. 1674.

# Six Lenten Sermons

*On the Five Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.*

BY MARCHANT.

## FIRST SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

### I.

JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANI.

After the Last Supper, having sung a hymn, Jesus went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron (John xviii, 1) and "went, according to His custom, to the Mount of Olives." Lk. xxii, 39. "Then Jesus came with them to a country place which is called Gethsemani, and He said to his disciples: Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray. And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to grow sorrowful, and to be sad." Mt. xxvi, 36. "And His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." Lk. xxii, 44. Let us consider why our Saviour commenced His Sacred Passion in the garden. Jesus went into the garden for the following reasons:

I. BECAUSE HE INTENDED TO OBSERVE A PIOUS CUSTOM.

He went, according to His custom, to the Mount of Olives. Lk. xxii, 39.

1. It was His custom, after He had preached and wrought miracles, to retire and betake Himself to prayer. "When He had dismissed the five thousand men whom He had fed, He went up into a mountain alone to pray. And when the evening was come, He was there alone." Mt. xiv, 23. At the last supper He had instructed His disciples and instituted that marvel of His love, the Blessed Sacrament, when He went into the garden of Olives to pray.

2. It should be our custom too to recollect ourselves in prayer, especially when the day's work is over. We should accustom ourselves to pious exercises.

II. BECAUSE CHARITY AND OBEDIENCE URGED HIM.

1. Charity toward the master of the house, who, having left the dining-room at His disposal, should not be molested by the seizure of Jesus.

2. Love and obedience to His Heavenly Father. That He might not appear desirous of escaping being seized by His enemies, He went to the place which Judas also knew. John xviii, 2. "That the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go hence." John xiv, 31. Would that we might also be induced by charity and obedience to labor and suffer.

III. IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE TYPE OF DAVID.

1. When Absalom had revolted against his father, David and the people went over the brook Cedron, and they all wept with a loud voice. II Kings xv, 23.

2. Christ went over the same brook and "began to grow sorrowful, and to be sad. Then He saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death." Mt. xxvi, 37. Jesus also was followed by a great multitude of martyrs. And as David was accompanied by his weeping subjects, so all the faithful ought to accompany Jesus on His way of the Cross, full of pity and compassion. And how faithfully have so many pious souls accompanied Him! Say to Him, as Eliseus said to Elias: "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." IV Kings ii, 2. Strive with Him unto death; He will be thy helper and leader.

IV. AS SECOND ADAM, HE WOULD MAKE SATISFACTION FOR THE SIN OF THE FIRST ADAM IN THE GARDEN IN WHICH THE FIRST SIN WAS COMMITTED.

1. Mark the following contrasts:

*a.* The disease is contracted in the garden, and the remedy found in the garden.

*b.* Death and life commence in the garden.

*c.* In the garden the First Adam is overcome by the devil, and the devil is overcome by the Second Adam.

*d.* In the garden the beginning of universal corruption and universal redemption.

2. Approach, now, O Adam, with all thy children, all mankind. Say no longer: "I heard Thy voice in paradise, and I was afraid, and I hid myself." Gen. iii, 10. The Lord thy God is present here again, but mild, healing and giving life, without a word of reproach, but praying, and as a Lamb led to the slaughter.

V. IN ORDER TO SYMBOLIZE HIS WORK OF MERCY AND PEACE, FOR THE OLIVE MEANS MERCY AND PEACE.

1. In the Old Testament the branch of olive carried by the dove into the Ark of Noah was the symbol of divine mercy and peace. The High-Priest entered into the sanctuary through doors of olive-trees. III Kings vi, 31, sqq.

2. In the New Testament Christ gathered sweet fruits of mercy in the garden of olives. Our High-Priest enters into the sanctuary through the door of olive trees, "neither by the blood of goats or of calves, but by His own blood." Heb. ix, 12. In regard to Christ, this garden is also the mountain of myrrh" (sufferings, anguish, sadness) and the "hill of frankincense," where He offered up His fervent prayers. Cant. iv, 6.

3. Make it thy custom, Christian soul, to come into this garden,

*a.* For the purpose of meditating on the fall of our first parents in the garden. "There thy mother was corrupted; there she was defloured that bore thee." Cant. viii, 5. In the garden it is too that thy mother begins her regeneration. Moreover, for the purpose of meditating on the mysteries by which the Mount of Olives is surrounded and rendered sacred. It is this mount whence Christ will ascend into heaven, where Anti-Christ will be killed, in the vicinity of which, in the valley of Jehosaphat, the Last Judgment will be held, where Christ will appear in the splendor of His majesty.

*b.* For the purpose of partaking of God's mercy. It is in this garden that the High-Priest of the New Covenant, burdened with the sins of the whole world, prostrates Himself before His

heavenly Father, offering Himself a sacrifice for the whole world, and for each individual soul. For as the High-Priest of the Old Covenant had the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraved in the "rational of judgment" upon His breast (Ex. xxviii, 29), so Jesus Christ carries you engraved in His sacred heart, and regards you as if he had no other soul to redeem, so that you may say with the Apostle: "He loved me, and delivered Himself for me." Gal. ii, 20.

*Peroration:* Make the firm resolution, and promise to your afflicted bridegroom, to abstain from sin, that you may not crucify Him anew.

## FIRST SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

### II.

#### THE BLOODY SWEAT OF OUR SAVIOUR.

Behold your Saviour in His greatest anguish, bathed in the bloody sweat of an inexpressible agony. St. Luke says: "And being in an agony, He prayed the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." Lk. xxii, 43, 44. The Holy Fathers assign several causes why this agony came over Jesus; following their trusty guidance, I will explain to you this mysterious conflict of our dearest Lord.

#### PART I.

#### THE CAUSES OF HIS BLOODY SWEAT WERE:

I. A vehement inward struggle.

1. On one hand He was seized by fear and horror of His Passion and death. Jesus foresaw and represented to Himself all the phrases of His Sacred Passion, and so anticipated them in His spirit. The anticipation of suffering sometime exceeds in acuteness the reality. "My heart is troubled within Me, and the fear of death is fallen upon Me. Fear and trembling are come upon Me, and darkness hath covered Me." Ps. liv, 5, 6.

2. On the other hand, He was burning with zeal for the honor of God and the redemption of men. This zeal did not allow Him to wait till the murderers should shed His blood with

scourges, thorns and nails, but He sheds it Himself from His entire body.—Is Jesus not truly "a bloody spouse" to us? Exod. iv, 25.

3. How great will be the anguish of the sinner at the sight of everlasting death and the endless pains of hell! "For if in the green woods they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?" Lk. xxiii, 31. The sinner will be like Antiochus who said in his heart: "Into how much tribulation am I come, and into what floods of sorrow, wherein now I am: I that was pleasant and beloved in my power?" Mach. vi, 11. The sinner will be like Esau, who, being deprived of his Father's blessing, "roared out with a great cry," Gen. xxvii, 34; or like the dying man, who, as St. Gregory relates, cried out: "Give me time, only till to-morrow, only till to-morrow give me time." O Jesus, for the sake of Thy bloody agony, forsake us not in our agony, and send us Thy holy angel to console us.

II. The representation of all the sins of the past, present and future.

1. He saw all sins in their hideousness before Him, weighed their malice against God, and their everlasting consequences; your sins, too, filled His heart and memory. From the sin of Adam and Cain, He saw all murders, perjuries, blasphemies, impurities, heresies, etc., down to the consummation of the world. How violent must have been the floods of sorrow that swept over Him!

2. He shed not common tears, but tears of blood: they came from every part of His sacred body, in order to wash the entire mystical body of His Church, according to the prophetic words of the dying Jacob: "He shall wash His robe in wine, and His garment in the blood of the grape." Gen. xlix, 11. And as Jesus Christ began His Sacred Passion and our Redemption by sweating water and blood, so we must help Him accomplish it in the same manner. John xix, 34.

III. The consideration that His Passion would prove useless to so many.

1. Jesus foresaw the blindness, rebellion and ingratitude of

many who would not profit by His blood shed for them, who would blaspheme it; thus He beheld the ruin of His chosen people, of which He complains: Mich. vi, 3. "O My people, what have I done to thee, or in what have I molested thee? answer thou Me;" the scandal the disciples would take in Him, the despair of Judas, etc.

2. This cause of His sufferings was prophesied. For Jesus complained of the soul that will not be washed by such tears: "Thy uncleanness is execrable: because I desire to cleanse thee, and thou art not cleansed from thy filthiness." Ezech. xxiv, 12. "I have labored in vain: I have spent My strength without cause and in vain." Is. xlix, 4.

IV. The fore-knowledge of all the pains, sufferings, and tribulations of all the Elect for His sake.

1. In general: He saw all the martyrs, confessors, virgins, and penitents, and knew their sufferings which He engraved in His own heart.

2. In particular: Jesus suffered for and with each one of them.

## PART II.

### THE MANNER OF HIS SWEATING BLOOD.

I. He sweat blood in the strict sense of the word.

1. Natural blood, as is the general belief of the Catholic Church, and the text of the Gospel unmistakably asserts: "His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." Lk. xxii, 44. The meaning is according to Suarez and others, that sweat and blood were mixed.

2. In a natural way, not by a miracle; for a miracle could have been wrought without causing any sufferings. Learn from this, how difficult and painful the work of our redemption was, as it was to be accomplished by means of all the blood of the Son of God.

II. He was full of sorrow. The consolation which the angel administered, did not lessen His sorrow, for the Evangelist adds immediately: "And being in an agony, He prayed the longer." Lk. xxii, 43. And venerable Bede writes: "Christ was strengthened

and consoled, but by such consolation as did not lessen His pains * * * He was was strengthened by the greatness of the fruit of His sufferings, their bitterness was not taken away from Him."

III. "He fell upon His face" Mt. xxvi, 39. He kissed the earth, so to say:

1. As the altar and chalice which were to receive His precious blood.

2. As if to thank the earth for having produced thorns for His head, a reed for His sceptre, iron for His nails and the spear, and the tree of the Cross. So great was His love and desire to suffer for us.

3. As if to petition the earth with the words of Job: "O earth, cover not thou My blood, neither let My cry find a hiding place in thee" (Job xvi, 19); but cry all over the universe, announcing that it was poured out to purify and soften the hearts of men, that they may hear the voice of this blood, and not cover and bury it by ingratitude.

*Peroration:* Hegesippus mentions a legend, saying that in the garden of Olives there grew a flower, on the leaves of which the words were to be seen: "O Death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee!" Eccles. xli, 1. Would to God that such flowers might appear in our hearts! Would that the bitter remembrance of the death of our Saviour, the remembrance of our death, as well as of the everlasting death of hell, might not escape our memory! Let us often enter in spirit into the garden of Olives that encloses so many mysteries. We may there gather so many flowers, such as the purple rose of love, the white lily of innocence, the celestial violet of humility, the sun flower of perfect resignation. St. Therese used to walk spiritually in the garden of Gethsemani, meditating now on the deep sadness of the countenance of her heavenly bridegroom, now on the anguish of His soul, or on the bloody sweat, which she sought to weep away with tears of compassion. She says that by so doing she made rapid progress in virtue. Go ye, and do likewise.

## SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

### THE SCOURGING OF OUR SAVIOUR AT THE PILLAR.

To the Saviour in His agony the soul may say what the Angel of the Lord said to the weary Elias: "Arise, for thou hast yet a great way to go." III Kings xix, 7. The bloody sweat is but the beginning of His sufferings; floods of blood will follow, and that very soon, especially in His cruel scourging. Let us then contemplate with devotion this humiliating and painful event in the bloody Sacrifice of our Redeemer, of this "man of sorrows." Is. liii, 3. Let us consider

#### POINT I.

#### THE SENTENCE OF PILATE.

"Then, therefore, Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him." John xix, 1. This sentence was

I. *Unjust*, as he declared before the High-Priests and the people the third time: "Why, what evil hath this man done? I find no cause of death in Him." Lk. xxiii, 22. The Judge himself "knew that through envy they had delivered Him up" (Mt. xxvii, 18), and, nevertheless, he pronounced the sentence: "I will chastise Him." Lk. xxiii, 22.

II. *Just, at the same time:* "For the wickedness of my people have I struck him." The love towards us, inducing Him to take our sins upon Himself, is the only cause of this cruel suffering.

III. *Ignominious;*

1. Only robbers and slaves were scourged; it was not lawful to scourge a Roman citizen. It was in this, too, that Jesus "was reputed with the wicked." Is. liii, 12.

2. His virginal and purest body was stripped of its garments in the sight of the most shameless of men. "Shame hath covered my face; I am become a stranger to my brethren." Ps. lxviii, 8. "I am the reproach of men, and the outcast of people." Ps. xxi, 7. Remember well, impure soul, this is thy work; it is for thy impurity that Jesus wished to suffer this ignominy.

POINT II.

CRUELTY OF THE SCOURGING.

We may infer this cruelty:

I. From the instruments applied. By these the entire body was so much wounded that "from the sole of the feet unto the top of the head there was no soundness." Is. i, 6. And this He suffered for our sins: He was wounded for our iniquities, He was bruised for our sins." Is. liii, 5.

II. From the condition of the sacred body of Christ, which was

1. Very tender and sensitive to suffering, because virginal, formed in the chaste womb of the purest virgin, and the masterpiece of divine omnipotence, hence very susceptible of pains and sufferings.

2. Exhausted in consequence of the bloody sweat and the sufferings of the previous night, during which He underwent so many sufferings, that their perfect knowledge, as St. Jerome says, is reserved to the day of judgment.

III. From the great number of stripes inflicted, as we infer

1. From the cruelty of the soldiers, who, being heathens, did not observe the law that they should not exceed the number of forty stripes. Deut. xxv, 3.

2. From the intention of Pilate, who would have Him deformed to such a degree that His aspect should move the Jews to compassion.

3. From His patience, meekness, and fortitude during His scourging, which inflamed the fury of the soldiers only the more, as they were not willing to be vanquished by Him. Our "bleeding spouse" says: "I am ready for scourges." Ps. xxxvii, 18. "I have given My body to the strikers, and My cheeks to them that plucked them. I have not turned away My face from them that rebuked Me, and spit upon Me." Is. l, 6.

IV. From the consequences of the scourging. For, our dear Lord was so much weakened that, for fear He might die before the time, Simon of Cyrene was forced to carry the Cross after Him.

V. Suffering Christians! Behold your Master lacerated in His entire body, no soundness being therein. You suffer because you deserve it, He suffers innocently. And when the nights appear wearisome to you, call to mind the painful night of the secret sufferings of Christ; unite your sufferings with His.

POINT III.

THE PILLAR.

I. He that is the pillar supporting the universe was tied to the pillar.

II. The bonds wherewith He was tied, are not so much the bonds of the soldiers, as those of charity and mercy. They bring us salvation

1. By loosening the fetters of iniquity and reopening the hand of mercy closed by our sins.

2. By holding back the hand of Divine Justice, so as not to fall upon us with all its weight.

3. By tying us to Jesus.

III. Every Christian soul should say to Jesus bound to the pillar: "Under Thy shadow (under the shadow of this pillar adorned by Thy sacred blood) we shall live among the nations." Lament. iv, 12. It is to us "a pillar of the cloud, and a pillar of fire (Exod. xiii, 21), which

1. Enkindles in us the light of charity, leading us out of the darkness of night, by which, in consequence of sin, we are surrounded.

2. Gives us cooling shade, in which we may rest and be protected against the heat of our vices and passions.

*Peroration:* Let us, then, seek rest in tender love and compassion for our scourged Redeemer, and in devout meditation under the shadow of this wonderful pillar. For it is sweet to rest and to be refreshed by the life-giving dew, the blood flowing from the wounds of our scourged Saviour. When St. Therese saw a new picture representing our Saviour covered with wounds and blood, she was moved with great compassion, and prayed Him not to suffer her to offend Him anymore. "From this time," she writes, "I commenced my conversion, and grew more zealous and faithful in the service of God."

## THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

### JESUS IS CROWNED WITH THORNS.

As men are incessantly studying and plotting how they may satisfy their passions, so Jesus was ever ready to expiate their nefarious plans and schemes by new sufferings and humiliations. Therefore it was that "the soldiers, platting a crown of thorns, put it upon His head." Let us meditate on

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CRUEL CROWN.

1. Jesus desired to be crowned

1. *As God.*

*a.* The gods of the Gentiles were adorned with crowns of gold, flowers, etc.

*b.* Jesus had asserted most solemnly before the High-Priest that He was Christ, the Son of God, Mt. xxvi, 63; wherefore the soldiers, to mock Him, put a crown upon His head. Our Saviour suffered to be crowned with thorns that He might render us fit to wear the crown of eternal glory and splendor.

2. *As High-Priest*, being anxious to offer up on the Cross the grand sacrifice of expiation and atonement.

*a.* The High-Priest of the Old Covenant had to put a linen mitre upon his head. Lev. xvi, 4.

*b.* Jesus, our High-Priest, wears the crown of thorns as a mitre during the great sacrifice of expiation. It is on the barren ground of our hearts, though often irrigated and blessed with celestial dew, that these thorns are grown. "My beloved looked that His vineyard (our hearts) should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." Is. v, 2. Our wicked hands, the evil deeds of pride, lust, envy, have platted these thorns into a crown, and put it on the sacred head of Christ, our Lord. We are, then, His real executioners. Let us repent of our sins, the real thorns upon the head of Christ, and in our conscience.

3. *As King.*

*a.* Jesus had avowed before Pilate, His judge, His being a king. Indeed, a king He was, the king of kings, whom the angels adore.

*b.* In the kingdom of Christ on earth there are only crowns of thorns; it is only by them that we obtain the crown of eternal glory! "It is not becoming that the members should be tender, when the head is crowned with thorns." St. Bernard. We must not fear these thorns, because they are harbingers of eternal bliss. "The house of Israel shall have no more * * a thorn causing pain." Ezech. xxviii, 24. Therefore, the Saints loved so much these thorns, and venerated the thorny crown of their dearest Lord.

When Jesus presented St. Catharine Senensis a golden crown and a crown of thorns, she chose the latter and pressed it upon her head.

4. *As Bridegroom.* He celebrates His nuptials

*a.* Under *inexpressible pains.* The nuptials of Jesus with the Church, inaugurated by the Incarnation, should be accomplished on the Cross; the nuptial crown is the crown of thorns; the wedding-day is the day of unspeakable sorrow and pain.

*b.* Nevertheless, *full of joy*, caused by the love He bears His bride, the Church. This day is called the day of the joy of His heart. Cant. iii, 11. For it is with a joyful heart that He espouses His Church.

II. THE PAINS OF HIS CORONATION.

1. Jesus suffered unutterable pains, as we may conclude,

*a.* From the nature of the thorns. The thorns in the Holy Land are so large and solid, that they are sometimes used instead of nails.

*b.* From the natural qualities of the head, being the part of the body most susceptible of pains. His sacred blood was flowing from innumerable cruel wounds, over His eyes, His mouth, and the entire face. "From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there is no soundness therein. wounds and bruises and swelling sores: they are not bound up, nor dressed, nor fomented with oil." Is. i, 6.

2. Being witnesses of His unlimited love, let us fulfill our duty of loving Him in return. "Open to Me, My sister, My love * * * (thy heart) for My head is full of dew." Cant. v, 2.

Your soul should address her bleeding spouse with the words of Bathuel: "Come in, thou Blessed of the Lord: why standest thou without? I have prepared the house." Gen. xxiv, 31.

III. IGNOMINIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CORONATION.

1. The scarlet cloak. "And stripping Him, they put a scarlet cloak about Him." Mt. xxvii, 28. This garment of mockery reminds us

*a.* Of *the dominion* He has acquired by the mockery and insults heaped upon Him. St. John saw Him, "clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood * * * And He has on His garment and on His thigh written: "King of kings, and Lord of lords." Apoc. xix, 13–16.

*b.* Of *our sins*, which Christ took upon Himself: the cloak, being shabby, soiled and tattered, is a true mocking-garment of man in his sins.

*c.* Of the *ardent love* of Jesus, as the white color represents His innocence. "My beloved is white and ruddy."

2. The reed. "They put a reed in His right hand." Mt. xxvii, 29. By this reed the soldiers intended to mock His royal dignity. It was our pride that caused this insult.

3. The sham homage. "And bowing the knee before Him, they mocked Him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews." Mt. xxvii, 29.

*a.* It was twice that Christ was greeted during His Sacred Passion, first by Judas, and then by the soldiers.

*b.* In like manner Christians greet Him now-a-days: either like Judas, with hidden mockery, (hypocrites,) or like the soldiers, by public mockery, such as those who cause scandal, or mock holy things; or with one knee, such as those who have their heart divided between God and the world.

4. "And spitting upon Him, they took the reed, and struck His head." Mt. xxvii, 30. "And they gave Him blows." xix, 3. Consider

*a.* The infinite ignominy, which Christ thus suffered. His divine countenance, the delight of the angels, spit upon, and swollen and disfigured by blows! O Christian soul, have compassion with thy Saviour and king!

*b.* The doctrine and example of humility and meekness. Be humble. "Why is earth and ashes proud?" Eccles. x, 9. "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." Mt. xi, 29.

*Peroration:* We should often represent to our minds this divine King in His scarlet cloak, and adore Him as our true king. It is to all devout and faithful souls that the words apply: "Go forth, ye daughters of Sion, and see King Solomon in the diadem, wherewith His mother crowned Him in the day of His espousals, and in the day of the joy of His heart." Cant. iii, 11.

## FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

### JESUS CARRYING HIS CROSS.

"Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, having taken water, washed his hands before the people, saying: 'I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it.'" Mt. xxvii, 24. "Pilate gave sentence, that their petition should be granted." Lk. xxiii, 24. "He delivered Him to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus and led Him forth. And bearing His own cross He went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgotha." John xix, 16, ff. Accompany thy Jesus, O Christian soul, on His way to Golgotha, and call to mind

### POINT I.

### THE PROPHECIES AND TYPES OF THIS PAINFUL AND WEARISOME JOURNEY.

A. The prophecies:

I. The *key* of the house of David. Is. xxii, 22: "I will lay the key of the house of David upon His shoulder."

1. The house of David is heaven, opened by Jesus, into which He led David and the other holy souls, who had been waiting in Limbo.

2. The key is the holy cross, which opens Limbo and Heaven. In testimony of His power Christ carries it on His shoulders.

II. The *government* upon His shoulder. Is. ix, 6: "A child is born to us, * * and the government is upon His shoulder." In this sense the Church says: "From the tree God governs." Now the Cross is an ornament upon the crowns of kings. "God forbid that I should glory, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal. vi, 14.

B. Many types have been fulfilled by Christ's carrying His Cross. For, we may see in our Jesus on His way to Golgotha:

I. *Abel*, who was led by his brother Cain into the field, to be slain by him. Gen. iv, 8.

II. *Isaac*, who, carrying the wood for the holocaust upon his shoulders, ascended mount Moriah, whilst his father Abraham carried in his hands fire and a sword. Gen. xxii, 6. The eternal Father accompanied His Son on His way to mount Calvary

1. With the fire of love. For, out of love for us He sacrificed His only-begotten Son; "for God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." John iii, 16. With Habacuc the Prophet we may say: "Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, for salvation with thy Christ." Hab. iii, 13.

2. With the sword of justice, wherewith He is to be slain as a holocaust for the expiation of our sins.

### POINT II.

### THE SUFFERING AND IGNOMINY OF CHRIST'S CARRYING HIS CROSS.

A. How painful the sufferings of Christ were, we may conclude

I. From His being repeatedly stripped of His garments before He took upon Himself the Cross, and thus all His wounds were torn open, and all His pains renewed.

II. From His carrying the crown of thorns upon His head.

III. From the weight of the Cross.

1. Its material weight was great in itself. Moreover,

Christ's natural strength was exhausted by the sweat of anguish, the sufferings of the previous night, the scourging and coronation; by no refreshment was He comforted. In the heat of the noon-day sun He carried the cross a long way from the palace of Pilate at the east end of the city to mount Calvary at the west end.

2. The weight of the mystical cross was far greater. All the sins of the world, of the past, present, and future, were laid upon His innocent soul.

*a.* Think of the great number of sins: blasphemies and curses, murders and adulteries, etc. Adam laid his disobedience and pride upon Him, David his adultery, etc. How many are the sins you laid upon Him?

*b.* Think of the immense weight of every sin. It throws the soul into the depths of hell; its weight is so great that when found in heaven, it fell like lightning into the depth of hell. Lk. x, 18.

IV. Behold in Christ carrying the cross the Lamb of God; behold He, "who taketh away the sin of the world." John i, 29. Every word is worthy of reflection:

1. The Lamb

*a.* Announced by the prophets. "He opened not His mouth. * * * He shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and He shall not open His mouth." Is. liii, 7. "I was as a meek lamb, that is carried to be a victim." Jerem. xi, 19.

*b.* Prefigured by the lamb eaten by the Israelites when about to leave Egypt (Ex. xii, 3); by the lamb which was to be offered every day in the morning and in the evening. Numb. xxviii, 3. This Lamb "without blemish" has shed His blood in the morning by the Circumcision, and in the evening by His Sacred Passion, "the Lamb which was slain from the beginning of the world." Apoc. xiii, 8.

*c.* Longed for by the fathers. "Send forth, O Lord, the Lamb, the ruler of the earth, from Petra of the desert, to the mount of the daughter of Sion." Is. xvi, 1.

2. The reason why Christ wants to be named the Lamb,

and St. John designates Him by this name twenty-seven times in his Apocalypse:

*a.* His *meekness*: "Learn from Me, for I am meek." It is by meekness that He helps His disciples to overcome their enemies.

*b.* His *innocence*, wherefore He loves the innocent.

*c.* His *purity*, wherefore He is the spouse of pure, virginal souls.

*d.* His destiny of *being a victim*, wherefore he encouraged so many martyrs to be slain as lambs for the glory of God.

3. The Lamb of God *i. e.*, sacrificed by God the Father, sacrificed to God the Father, the Godhead dwelling in Him substantially.

4. "Behold, He who taketh away the sins of the world."

*a.* Jesus took our sins upon Himself, "who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live to justice." I Pet. ii, 24.

*b.* All the sins of the past, present, and future, the sins of all nations, and of everyone of us. "Sacrifices thou wouldst not. * * * Then said I: Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God. * * By the which will we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once." Heb. x, 9.

B. How ignominious it was for Jesus to carry His cross, we may infer from these circumstances:

1. Jesus appears as a malefactor. Robbers, rebels, and murderers were thus punished. Cf. Esth. ii, 23.

2. "There were also two other malefactors led with Him, to be put to death." Lk. xxiii, 32. What ignominious company for the King of Glory!

3. All was done publicly: *a.* about noon, *b.* through the whole length of the Holy City, *c.* preceded by a herald who by the sound of a trumpet announced the sentence; *d.* The enemies of Jesus, Pharisees, Scribes, High-Priests, and an immense crowd of people were witnesses. Lk. xxii, 1.

*Peroration:* We are obliged to carry our cross after Jesus, because (1) He is our head, and we the members. Heb. xii, 1

ff. (2) It is Christ's express command, addressed to everyone. "If any man will come after me," etc. Lk. ix, 23. (3) There is absolutely no other way leading to heaven. Rom. viii, 17. (4) The Saints, patient bearers of the Cross, teach you the same. Behold Simon of Cyrene who gained heaven! Say to Jesus what Ethai said to David: "In what place soever thou shalt be, lord my king, either in death, or in life, there will thy servant be." II Kings xv, 21.

## FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY.

### THE CRUCIFIXION OF OUR LORD.

The procession, in the centre of which is the Lamb of God, at last arrives on Mount Calvary. The cross, the altar of the holocaust, the throne of grace and mercy, is in readiness. The bleeding Bridegroom desires to be espoused to the Daughter of Man, the Holy Church. How cruel a spectacle! Come, O Christian soul, and witness thy own regeneration in the blood of thy Saviour, and see if there is sorrow like unto His sorrow.

### POINT I.

### BEHOLD THE BY-STANDERS.

1. There are crowds of strangers and inhabitants of Jerusalem assembled on the Mount of Calvary * * * What has led them thither? Some are moved with compassion, others, and in far greater number, are come to satisfy their curiosity; but the greatest number of them are induced to come by hatred and the cruel desire to feast their eyes on the bloody scene.

2. Behold the executioners, whose inward fury is revealed by their angry glances. They are furious in seeing themselves overcome by the patience of their victim.

3. Behold the Pharisees and rulers of the Synagogue, whose desire for revenge is to be satisfied at last, because they have, according to their own belief, branded the name of Jesus, because He is, thanks to their machinations, condemned to die the most cruel and most ignominious death * * * They cannot conceal their Satanic delight.

4. Behold the two malefactors, who, to increase the ignominy of His death, are to be crucified with the Son of God. Nevertheless one of them will contribute to the increase of His glory.

5. Behold the women lamenting and weeping over Jesus * * * Mary Magdalene, absorbed in grief over the death of her Beloved * * * And the Mother of God * * * How deeply the sword of grief must have entered her loving heart! * * St. John sharing her sorrow and grief.

6. Behold the Saviour Himself, first in the midst of His enemies, then fastened to the cross with dreadful nails, and hanging between heaven and earth—a sacrifice of propitiation for your sins.

### POINT II.

### LISTEN TO THE WORDS UTTERED.

1. What say the people upon whom the Saviour has lavished so many benefits? "Vah, Thou Who destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, save Thy own self: if Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Mt. xxvii, 40.

2. What say the Chief-Priests with the Scribes and ancients? "He saved others: Himself He cannot save. If He be the king of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; for He said: 'I am the Son of God.'" l. c. 42, f.

3. What say the malefactors, who were crucified with Him? "One of those robbers who were hanging, blasphemed Him, saying: If thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other rebuked him, saying: Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done no evil * * Lord remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom." Lk. xxiii, 39 ff. Hear Mary and the pious women weep, whilst their hearts are conversing with Jesus. Pay the closest attention to the words of Jesus on the Cross. Hear Him

say to His Father: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." To the penitent thief: "Amen, I say to thee, this day Thou shalt be with me in paradise." To Mary and the Disciple: "Woman, behold thy son. Son, behold thy mother." "My God, my God, why hast Thou foresaken me.—I thirst.—It is consummated.—Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

POINT III.

CONSIDER THE ACTIONS.

The executioners strip Jesus of His garments, thus renewing the pains of the scourging. The Lamb of God is laid upon the altar of the cross. Jesus extends His hand to the executioner * * What is he to do with this divine hand that has done so many good deeds? * * He seizes it with cruel violence, sets a heavy nail upon it and finishes his cruel work * * From one hand he turns to the other, from the hands to the feet. The Lamb of God is lifted up and hangs between heaven and earth, the one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus. I Tim. ii, 15.

*Peroration:* O Jesus, draw my heart to Thee. Let me always remember: Dilexit me et tradidit semetipsum pro me.—Love Jesus ardently, abhor sin continually, have a burning zeal for the salvation of your soul and the souls of those committed to your care.

Chaignon.

## Five Sermons

*Suitable for the Laying of the Corner-Stone or Dedication of a Church, and Other Similar Occasions.*

### I.

### THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY A TEMPLE OF GOD.

"Behold, the Tabernacle of God with men; and He will dwell with them. And they shall be His people; and God Himself with them shall be their God." Apoc. xxi, 3.

These words are applied to our churches, where God distributes His graces. In them the promise, once made with regard to the temple at Jerusalem, has been perfectly fulfilled. "I have chosen, and have sanctified this place, that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart may remain there perpetually." II Par. vii, 16. Besides being a house of grace, the Christian temple is also an image and pattern of a Christian family, (1) with regard to the foundation, (2) to the walls, (3) to the roof, so that it may be said of every Christian family, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God with men," etc.

I.

1. When the building of a new church is contemplated, many serious preparations are necessary. "The work is great; for a house is prepared not for man, but for God." I Par. xxix, 1. Then the foundation is dug, and solid stones laid in it, that the edifice to be supported by this foundation may resist the winds and storms.

A Christian family should be built on a solid foundation also. Young men, before entering the state of matrimony, should first know how to support a family. Nobody builds a house in the air or on sand. The Christian family ought to have its foundation on the soil of the earth also; for we are no pure spirits who have no earthly wants to supply.

Another indispensable foundation is virtue: industry, mor-

tification, self-denial, honesty, a deep religious spirit, true love of God and our neighbor.

"Which of you having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it, lest after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that see it begin to mock him, saying: This man began to build, and was not able to finish." Lk. xiv, 28-30.

2. The foundation or corner-stone of the new church is blessed and laid by the bishop, or, by special commission, by a priest. On the place where the high altar is to be erected, the cross is planted. This place is first sprinkled with holy water. Then the corner-stone is blessed, and, after the recital of the Litany of the Saints, laid in its place, and God implored that in this place the true faith may flourish for all time to come. After this the clergymen walk in procession around the foundation of the church, and with the chanting of psalms sprinkle it with holy water. When the church is completed, it is consecrated by the bishop under the most solemn ceremonies. Thus the church becomes a blessed house of God and a house of prayer in the midst of the houses of men.

Behold, Christian husbands and wives, what your houses ought to be. The Church blesses the ground on which a new Christian family is to be established. By the grace of a holy sacrament, which St. Paul calls a great mystery in Christ and the Church, she blesses and strengthens man and woman to be a sacred foundation of a Christian family. "The work is great; for a house is prepared not for man, but for God;" for married people must assist each other on their pilgrimage to God, to heaven, and their children are to be brought up and educated for the kingdom of heaven.

Is it not necessary in our days, and particularly in this country, to reflect on this truth? Our age demands civil marriage, in consequence of which matrimony is reduced to a civil contract, and our families are deprived of their holy and supernatural character. You may boast of the kindest husband or wife, and

the best children; unless you have been united together with the blessing of the Church, you are not what as Christians you ought to be; your house is not a house of God, and time will teach you that the house of your happiness has no solid foundation, and will fall to the ground. Your house should be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in Whom all the building framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord." Eph. ii, 20.

II.

After the foundation of the church is blessed, the walls rise upon it, from which the church edifice derives its strength and solidity. In a like manner every Christian house should be strengthened and protected by four walls: the four virtues of justice, diligence, temperance, and patience.

1. *Justice* is the first principal wall. Justice is the foundation of kingdoms and states, as well as of families, being the great virtue that gives every one his own, to Cæsar that which belongs to Cæsar, and to God that which belongs to God, and conscientiously fulfills all the duties towards our neighbor. You are aware that in the erection of a good building, the most minute conformity with the plan of the architect must be observed. In like manner the will of God, the supreme architect, Who has made the design for each Christian family, must be faithfully observed. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," said Josue to the people of Israel, exhorting them to observe in justice all the commandments of the Lord. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord; this should be your determination also, ye Christian fathers and mothers. We and our children will make the morning and night offerings; we will say our prayers before and after meals. We will observe the fasts of the Church, the Sundays and Holidays. We will fulfill in justice our duties to one another, and to our neighbors, remembering the promise of the Holy Ghost: "The house of the wicked shall be destroyed; but the tabernacles of the just shall flourish." Prov. xiv, 11.

2. No house is built, no wall is erected, except with *hardships and exertions.* * * * Who could count the drops of sweat trickling from the brow of the laborers, till the last blow of the hammer is struck?

With great industry and activity the walls of your house must be built. Labor is expressly enjoined by God, and after the unhappy fall of our first parents, is a great blessing for all. To all of us the word is spoken: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken." Gen. iii, 19. "Thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands; blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee." Ps. cxxvii, 2. This necessity is the more urgent with regard to those who have founded a new family. If it is wrong to give life to children whom you are not able to support, the sin is far greater, if parents do not strive to provide for their family the necessaries of life.

3. In all beautiful churches you behold a chaste *plainness* and a *noble moderation.* * * * Plainness, moderation, and prudent economy will preserve the fruits of your labor. Luxury and dissipation are the ruin of families. * * * *Christian* lavishness consists in being liberal for the honor of God and the welfare of our neighbor.

4. The fourth wall is *patience.* In this church every part stands patiently in its place, thus imparting strength to the entire building. Can a family exsist without the virtue of patience? Can sinful and passionate beings live together in peace, unless they bear one another's burdens? Afflictions, sufferings, poverty, death, are occasional visitors. Then, indeed, "patience is necessary for you; that, doing the will of God, you may receive the promise." Heb. x, 36. "Bear ye one another's burdens; and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. vi, 2.

*Peroration:* The church edifice is completed by the vault and the roof. The vault and roof of a Christian family are Faith, Hope, and Charity, protecting its inmates from all evil. Faith invests the father with authority, is the source of conjugal fidelity and charity, and teaches the children to be obedient. Hope

is the child of faith, being a firm confidence in God and His assistance. Trust in God, when the clouds of affliction are hanging over your roof. What Holy Scripture says of King Ezechias, would that it could be said of each member of a family: "He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel. * * * Wherefore, also, the Lord was with him." IV Kings xviii, 5-7. "And now there remain Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity." I Cor. xiii, 13. Charity is the queen of the three. If you love God sincerely, you will love one another also. "Charity is patient, is kind; Charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own," etc. I Cor. xiii, 4. If your house is thus like to the house of God, it may be said of it as well as of the Church: "Behold, the Tabernacle of God with men; and He will dwell with them. And they shall be His people; and God Himself with them shall be their God."

Joseph Ehrler.

## II.

## PRAYER IN THE HOUSE OF GOD.

"One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life. That I may see the delight of the Lord and may visit His temple." Ps. xxvi, 4.

These words of the Psalmist are the expression of the general feeling of the Jews of old respecting their temple. We Catholic Christians, however, have a more urgent reason to dwell in our temples, because Jesus Christ, hidden under the appearance of bread, is present on our altars day and night. We have more reason to visit our churches, because there our prayers are surer to be heard: for many assist us there in praying; and the holy mysteries celebrated in our churches impart to our prayer a peculiar strength and efficacy.

I.

True, we should pray everywhere. "I will, that men pray

in every place, lifting up pure hands." I Tim. ii, 8. God heard St. Paul's prayer, when in prison; He heard Daniel's prayer in the lions' den; He heard the thief on the cross, and Jonas in the bowels of the fish. Nevertheless, the church is a more appropriate place for prayer, because it is a sacred place.

1. The surroundings excite our devotion: the structure of the church, the stillness, the pictures of our Saviour, of the Blessed Mother, and the other Saints.

2. This place has been blessed by the Church. When the bishop laid the foundation stone, and when he dedicated this building to the honor of Almighty God, he prayed with the priests that all prayers to be said in this house might be heard and granted by the Father in Heaven. With holy oil the walls and altars were dedicated to divine service. Should your prayer not be better, when poured forth on such holy ground?

3. God gave us the most solemn promises that He would grant the petitions laid before Him in His temple. He said to Solomon: "I have chosen this place to Myself for a house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven, and there fall no rain, or if I give orders and command the locust to devour the land, or if I sent pestilence among My people; and My people, upon whom My name called, being converted, shall make supplication to Me: then will is I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land. My eyes also shall be open, and My ears attentive to the prayer of him that shall pray in this place. For I have chosen, and have sanctified this place, that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart may remain there perpetually." II Par. vii, 12–15. Is this promise not also made with regard to our temples, which are so much more sacred than the temple at Jerusalem, as the New Testament is above the Old?

"When Solomon had made an end of his prayer, fire came down from heaven, and consumed the holocausts and the victims; and the majesty of the Lord filled the house. Neither could the priests enter into the temple of the Lord: because the majesty of the Lord had filled the temple of the Lord." L. c. v, 1. The majesty of the Lord, being present under the veil of bread, fills

our temples in the strictest sense of the word; so that they are truly houses of God and houses of prayer. Lk. xix, 46.

For these reasons, we Catholics repeat from our hearts the words of the Psalmist: "One thing I have asked of the Lord," etc. Our church is the place of refuge, whenever we are in distress. And at our entry we show reverence to the house of God, being mindful of the words once addressed to Moses: "Put off the shoes from thy feet: for the place, whereon thou standest, is holy ground." Ex. ii, 5.

II.

In the church we have many *associated* with us in prayer.

1. Our prayer ascends to heaven in union with the supplications of all the *faithful* who with us attend divine service. The whole congregation, the sheep and the innocent lambs of the flock, pray with us. "Where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Mt. xviii, 20.

2. In the church the *angels* of heaven pray with us. If in the blessed Christmas night there was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God (Lk. ii, 13), should they leave the same divine Saviour, hidden under the appearance of bread, alone in our churches? Should they not praise Him and carry the prayers of the faithful before the throne of God? Truly, in our churches is accomplished the vision of St. John: "And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer: and there was given to Him much incense, that He should offer of the prayers of all Saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the Saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the Angel." Apoc. viii, 3. Should our prayers not be more acceptable to God, when brought before His throne by the heavenly spirits? "I will sing praise to Thee in the sight of the Angels. I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and I will give glory to Thy name." Ps. cxxxvii, 1.

3. In our churches we pray in union with the *Saints whose memory is particularly cherished in them.* Our houses of worship

are mostly dedicated under the name of a Saint. On every altar we hold in veneration the relics of God's friends. Should they not be the guardian saints of those who pray in their houses?

4. In our churches *Jesus Christ Himself* prays with us in "unspeakable groanings." There He is, our mediator, with His sacred wounds and His loving heart, with His merits and satisfactions. God promised Abraham to spare the wicked cities, if there were ten just men found in them: should the same God not graciously look down upon a whole congregation, and grant the petitions of the unjust for the sake of the just and the glory of His Saints and His only-begotten Son?

III.

Of all the mysteries performed in our churches, the holy sacrifice of mass is the one which mostly attracts the faithful.

The Sacred Passion and Death of Jesus Christ are represented to us again. The sacrifice of the cross, with all the preceding sufferings, is renewed on our altars in an unbloody manner. Do you see now, how valuable must be a prayer said during this tremendous sacrifice? If, like the Blessed Virgin and St. John, you could have accompanied your Saviour on His way to Calvary; if, with Veronica or the daughters of Jerusalem, you could have approached Him; do you think He could have refused your petitions at those moments? If during the dreadful hours, when He was hanging on the cross, you would have cried out to Him: "Suffer not Thy precious blood to be shed for me in vain:" do you think you would have left the Cross without being heard?

All these desires are accomplished by the holy sacrifice of mass. The bloody sacrifice of the cross is renewed on our altars in an unbloody manner. "This is My body which is given for you." Lk. xxii, 19. "This is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins." Mt. xxvi, 28.

*Peroration:* One who has a vivid faith, will repeat the words of Holy Scripture: "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life: that I may see the delight of the Lord * * and may visit

His temple." He that comes here to pray, will pray in his own house also. And he who neglects divine service, will not pray under his own roof either. Let us, then, love the splendor of the house of God on earth, till we enter the house of God in eternity, to praise Him with the angels of heaven for evermore.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## III.

## WHAT DOES A CATHOLIC FIND IN HIS CHURCH?

"How terrible is this place! this is no other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven." Gen. xxviii, 17. Our Church adopts these words of Jacob, the Patriarch, in her liturgy of this present day. Indeed, here we stand on sacred ground, on the most sacred and most awful place on earth. Not in a vision, but really, with the eyes of faith, we see here heaven open, knowing that Jesus is present here. Not only angels of heaven have descended to surround our altars; but the only-begotten Son of the Father appears in our midst to dwell among us. A Catholic church is not merely the gate of heaven, but heaven itself, being the "Tabernacle of God with men." It is this dignity of the house of God to which I will invite your attention. I say: The house of God is a never failing source of graces, and a lighthouse on our way into eternity.

### I.

### A NEVER FAILING SOURCE OF GRACES.

In our churches Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, is present, not only as God, but as God and man. A Catholic church is the crib, wherein the Son of the Heavenly Father reposed. It is the Holy House of Nazareth, wherein He dwelled the greater part of His temporal life. It is the Sacred Land, where He went about doing good. It is the coenaculum, where He held His Last Supper with His disciples. It is Mount Calvary, covered with the blood of the Son of God. It is the Sacred Sepulchre, wherein the sacred body of the Lord is laid, bound in linen cloths. It is the house of glory, where we adore Jesus

Christ sitting at the right of His Father. Therefore, as it is impossible to enumerate all the graces once bestowed on mankind by Jesus Christ, so we are not able to enumerate all the blessings we receive from our churches. Our whole life is sanctified by the church; and those blessed hours, upon which we depend for our salvation, are prepared for us by the Church.

1. To this place you were carried, when you had opened your eyes to the light of this world as a child of wrath; and as a child of God, clothed with the raiment of sanctifying grace, you were replaced into the hands of your mother. As a child of God you had become a member of the body of Jesus Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost and an heir of heaven.—What would you be without the church? A child of the earth, never to enter the kingdom of heaven. "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii, 5.

2. When you had obtained the proper age it was in this house that you were instructed in the *knowledge* of salvation and eternal life. You were exhorted to practice the Christian virtues, and thereby adorn and ennoble your present life, and make sure of your salvation. How often was your heart strengthened against the temptations of life! Here a future life, the true consolation in your many afflictions, was pointed out to you; without the sunshine from these remote regions the gift of life were rather a burden than a blessing.—What would you be without the church? You would wander, fatigued and weary, on thorny paths, to perceive, at the end of your life, that you had gone astray.

3. In this house we obtained *forgiveness* of our sins, when, after baptism, we had deviated from the right path. The wounds of our heart were dressed and healed. Guilt and punishment were remitted, lost grace restored, and peace of heart returned. What would you be without the church, after having sinned? The night of despair would be your lot.

By the *most blessed Sacrament* of the body and blood of Jesus Christ the most intimate union between the Creator and the creature is established. He is our nourishment, our friend and

helper.—Without the church your heart would hunger and thirst after God, and never be satiated.

4. In this house you receive the Holy Ghost in the Sacrament of *confirmation*, receiving strength to resist the many temptations, and to preserve the graces received.—Here, on the steps of this altar, you contracted the bonds of *matrimony*, being with your bride an image of the intimate union between Jesus Christ and His holy church, and receiving the necessary assistance to endure all the hardshps of married life.—When the end of our life is approaching, and we are no longer able to come to the church and drink of her fountains of grace, the church will come to us, sending her minister to anoint our feeble senses, and to provide us with the viaticum for the last journey.

What urgent reasons have we to exclaim in the words of the Psalmist: "How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God. Better is one day in Thy courts above thousands. I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God, rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners." Ps. lxxxiii, 2–11.

II.

THE CHURCH IS A LIGHT-HOUSE ON THE WAY TO ETERNITY.

Our churches our elevated above the dwellings of men, to attract attention.

1. The *steeple* is to us an earnest "Sursum Corda." Heavenward, it says, lift up your eyes! There is your home. Never allow yourself to be absorbed in the enjoyments of earthly pleasures and possessions.

2. The *cross* on the steeple announces to the world: "There is no salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." Act. iv, 12. Follow on the way to Calvary Him who made it the royal way leading to heaven. Never be ashamed of publicly confessing your faith in the Crucified.

3. How manifold and heart-stirring are the exhortations of

the consecrated *bells*! They exhort us to attend divine service and to pray. They are the heralds of both joy and sadness.

4. When you enter the church, you take the *Holy Water*, which reminds you of purity of heart and the tears of penance.

5. The *flags* call to your mind the necessity of struggling against sin and temptation, and the triumph which will follow your victory. The *pictures* and *statutes* of the Saints place before us models of a truly Christian life, and those represented by them are our intercessors.

6. Behold the *confessional*, inviting you to do penance, and the *pulpit*, reminding you to preserve God's word in your heart. Behold the *candles* and the *sanctuary lamp*, are they not images of the love of God, which should burn in our hearts? And should they not call to our mind the words of our Saviour: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven?" Mt. v, 16.

*Peroration:* There is, however, yet another temple, infinitely more precious, and nearer to our hearts, than this visible temple: "*You* are the temple of the living God." II Cor. vi, 16. Protect this temple from profanation by sin. "Glorify and bear God in your body." I Cor. vi, 20. "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days." Ps. xcii, 5.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## IV.

## THE CATHOLIC HOUSE OF GOD.

"This day is salvation come to this house." Lk. xix, 9. It is an infinite grace, when God visits man. Salvation is come to the house of Zacheus, by Jesus Christ deigning to enter it. These words are appropriately applied to this solemn occasion, for which we are assembled here to-day. On the day when this church was dedicated to divine service, the Son of the eternal Father took His abode among the children of Adam, entering the house which was anointed by episcopal hands. Therefore, a Catholic house of God is most venerable, nay, most wonderful.

In golden letters we should read above its portals the inscription: "Salvation is come to this house." * * * Let us meditate on this grandeur of a Catholic house of God, and consider its greatest glory, treasure, and ornament.

I.

The greatest glory of a Catholic house of God is the cross, conspicuous upon all our altars. * * * It is to our churches what the crown is to a king, the laurel-wreath to the victorious warrior.

1. Our churches derive from the cross their highest dignity.

The highest dignity of a church consists, no doubt, in its being a temple of the true God. Whereby does it prove itself to be a temple of God? By the cross, this being the foundation-stone of divine faith.

On the cross Jesus Christ offered Himself, Whom Holy Scripture represents to us as the "Son of the living God" (Mt. xvi, 16), as "the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John i, 14), in whom "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead corporally." Col. ii, 9. On the cross He has reconciled the world and laid the foundation of the new divine kingdom, the kingdom of truth and life. * * * Therefore, Christian faith is based on the cross. Religious bodies which do not know the cross, bear the mark of falsehood and delusion.

2. To the Cross our Church is indebted for her heavenly sacrifice. God, being the Eternal Majesty, is entitled to an infinitely holy and precious sacrifice. Jesus Christ has offered up this sacrifice on the cross, "delivering Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God, for an odor of sweetness." Eph. v, 2. This sacrifice of the cross is daily renewed on our altars by the holy sacrifice of mass in an unbloody manner. Therefore, the Father in heaven is honored in a Catholic Church, as it becomes His divine majesty. "By no sacrifice is God more honored than by the holy sacrifice of mass, which Jesus Christ left to His Church, to present to the father a perfectly adequate honor." St. Laur. Just.

The cross is then the highest glory of a Catholic house of God. Let us, when entering our churches, with sincere joy lift up our eyes to the cross. "God forbid that I should glory but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Gal. vi, 14.

II.

The greatest treasure of the Catholic house of God is the Holy Eucharist.

1. This treasure is of *infinite value.*

In the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is present under the appearances of bread and wine. This is manifestly so great a treasure that heaven itself promises no greater one. For this reason the Catholic house of God is infinitely rich, though it be but an insignificent frame building. By the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar it possesses a treasure, the value of which infinitely surpasses all created things.

2. This treasure is *inexhaustible* for all times to come.

The richest earthly treasures can be exhausted. It has often happened that families, possessed of great riches, were reduced to beggary. But the treasure of the Holy Eucharist is inexhaustible. "Whether one or thousands eat, all receive the selfsame meat, nor the less for others leave." Your ancestors were partakers of this treasure, and your children and children's children will partake of it to the remotest times. By the miraculous power of consecration, conferred upon the priests of the church, provision has been made that this treasure may never fail.

How happy we are that so great a treasure has been deposited in our churches! Exhortation to frequent communion. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life." John vi, 55. "By partaking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, we become Christophori." St. Cyrill, of Jerusalem.

III.

The most beautiful ornament of a Catholic house of God is a pious congregation.

1. How beautiful is a devout heart!

It excels the sun in splendor, the blooming spring in beauty. The human soul becomes, in consequence of sanctifying grace, a bright mirror of divine beauty, which it reflects. "How beautiful art thou, my love; how beautiful art thou!" Cant. iv, 1. The soul in the state of grace is far more beautiful than any earthly beauty. If one soul is so beautiful, how great must be the beauty of so many souls, the beauty of a whole congregation? Can there be a greater ornament for our churches? What is, in comparison, the splendor of the richest and most gorgeous vestments, the splendor of lights and golden chalices? True, all this beauty of the soul is not visible to human eyes: "All the glory of the king's daughter is within in golden borders." Ps. xliv, 14. But God's eyes behold this beauty with complacency.

2. How beautiful is innocence!

The soul of an innocent person is a spouse of God and a temple of the Holy Ghost. Who is able to describe her beauty! She is beautiful as an angel. She is glorious, holy, and without blemish. Eph. v, 27. How splendid an ornament in the eyes of God must be these many innocent children, when assembled in church!

*Peroration:* Thus a pious congregation is the most attractive ornament of the House of God. Let, then, virtue grow in your hearts. "Be you, therefore, perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. v, 48), and our church is beautified by your presence. If poverty makes it impossible for you to contribute for the adornment of your church, visit it with piety and sanctifying grace in your heart, and you are a splendid light in the house of God. Exhortation to the parents, to send regularly their children to church.

Joseph Schuen.

## V.

## THE CHURCH A HOUSE OF PRAYER.

The dedication of a church means changing an edifice into a house of prayer, where only prayers are to be said, and every

petition is to be granted. A church is a house of prayer for two reasons.

I. BECAUSE GOD HEARS OUR PRAYER IN CHURCH.

Eight kinds of prayer are heard in church:

1. The sinner obtains forgiveness of his sins. "If any man trespass against his neighbor, and have an oath upon him, wherewith he is bound, and come because of the oath, before Thy altar to Thy house, then hear Thou in heaven." III Kings viii, 31. We are bound to God by an oath. We often trespass against Him. Yet when we appear humbled in His temple, we return home justified, like the Publican.

2. He who is tempted, finds relief. "If Thy people Israel shall fly before their enemies, and shall come and pray, and make supplications to Thee in this house, then hear Thou in heaven." L. c. 33. The enemies of our soul are the devils, who fight many battles against us. We must seek strength against their attacks in the church, where we are sure to find it.

3. He who finds no delight in spiritual things, is to be refreshed. "If heaven shall be shut up, and there shall be no rain, and they praying shall do penance, then hear Thou them in heaven." V. 35. This is to be understood in a sense both verbal and spiritual. Our soul is often dry land, but is refreshed in church.

4. The sick are cured. "If a famine arise in the land, or a pestilence, or corrupt air, or mildew, whatsoever plague, whatsoever infirmity, then hear Thou in heaven, in the place of Thy dwelling." V. 37. This may be applied to the capital sins, being the common diseases of the human soul.

5. The afflicted finds consolation. "When a man shall know the wound of his own heart, and shall spread forth his hands in this house, then hear Thou in heaven." V. 38. Sadness before God is converted into joy. When your heart is sad, seek refuge in the church.

6. The stranger finds salvation. "Moreover, also, the stranger who is not of Thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far country for Thy name's sake, and shall pray in this

place; then hear Thou in heaven, in the firmament of Thy dwelling place; and do all those things, for which that stranger shall call upon Thee." V. 41. In our churches even sinners, heretics, infidels, find their salvation, if they seek it by prayer.

7. He who is absent, receives strength for combat and victory, if he turns his thoughts to the church! "If Thy people go out to war against their enemies, they shall pray to Thee toward the house which I have built to Thy name; then hear Thou in heaven their prayers and their supplications, and do judgment for them." V. 44. He who visits the church only in spirit, shall be heard.

8. The captive finds deliverance. "If they sin against Thee and are led away captives, and they do penance and pray to Thee toward the way of the temple, then hear Thou in heaven." V. 46. Whoever, in consequence of sickness, etc., is a captive in his own house, and is prevented from going to church, but enters it in spirit, will be heard.

II. BECAUSE THE CHURCH IS EXCLUSIVELY DESTINED FOR PRAYER.

The church is built and dedicated to be a tabernacle of God with men. Men must come here

1. To offer up the tremendous sacrifice, which is not allowed in other places.

2. To receive information in regard to God, for which the church is the most suitable place.

3. To receive from God means of salvation and grace, which He distributes here in an abundant measure.

4. To praise and adore God in common, for which the church is the most suitable place.

*Peroration:* Now you may judge how impious is the conduct of those who in church not only neglect the duty of prayer, but moreover, disturb others, and profane the sacred place.

St. Bonaventura.

## Ascension Day.

### I.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FEAST.

"And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God." Mk. xvi, 19. The feast of the Ascension dates back to the earliest ages of Christianity; St. Augustine does not hesitate to ascribe its introduction to the Apostles, it being but natural that they should have annually celebrated the day, when they saw their Lord and Master ascending into heaven. Ever since St. Helen built a magnificent church on the sacred spot where Jesus was taken up into heaven, this feast has been celebrated with the greatest possible solemnity up to our own times. And, indeed, the significance of this festival day is so grand and sublime as to solicit the highest honors. We shall endeavor to show the meaning and importance of this solemnity, by answering the two questions: (1) In which manner, (2) for what purpose, has Jesus Christ ascended into heaven?

PART I.

To answer the question, *how* Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, we must consider the time, place, and circumstances, of His Ascension.

1. After His resurrection our Saviour remained yet forty days on earth, partly to perfectly convince His disciples of the reality of His resurrection, partly to give them the necessary instructions and commissions for their high calling. St. Luke says in the Epistle of this present day that to the Apostles "He showed Himself alive after His Passion, by many proofs, for forty days, appearing to them and speaking of the kingdom of God." He had during forty days, spent in the desert, prepared Himself for the work of our redemption, and He spends the same number of days to apply to us the fruit of His redemption. "And as Jesus lay forty hours in the sepulchre, as a proof of His real death, so He remained yet forty days on earth, as a proof of His new life."

St. Thomas Aqu. The faith in His resurrection being the foundation of our religion, Jesus Christ would firmly establish it by abiding forty days with His disciples. He chose a *Thursday* for His Ascension, because on a Thursday He commenced His Sacred Passion, thus insinuating to us that on the very day when God sends us afflictions, He prepares our glory. Jesus ascended at noon time, because as the sun reaches the summit of His course by noon, so the eternal Sun of Justice reached the summit of His glory by ascending into heaven. In the explanation of the words (Ps. liv, 18): "Evening and morning, and at noon I will speak and declare: and He shall hear My voice," St. Augustine and St. Prosper make the appropriate remark that our Lord died in the evening, arose in the morning, and ascended at noon, as a constant exhortation for us to sanctify these three parts of the day by fervent prayer and good resolutions.

2. The *place* where our Lord ascended into heaven, is, according to Acts i, 12, Mount Olivet, near Jerusalem.

*a.* Mount Olivet had been to Jesus the mount of *prayer*. There He had passed whole nights in watching and praying; there He had poured out His soul in humble supplications on the eve of His Passion. By choosing this mount for the place of His Ascension, He insinuates to us that, in order to join His society in heaven, we must now keep our eyes continually fixed on heaven by fervent prayer. St. Alphonso says very appropriately: "All the reprobate in hell have been condemned, because they neglected prayer; if they had prayed, they would not have perished for all eternity. All the Saints have attained heaven, because they were zealous in prayer; if they had not prayed, they would have attained neither sanctity nor eternal happiness."

*b.* Jesus Christ had commenced His *Passion* on Mount Olivet. To-day He passed over the brook Cedron by the very same way which He had chosen in that mournful night when He was by His ungrateful disciple betrayed into the hands of His enemies. The same mount being thus the mount of His Passion as well as of His Ascension, we are reminded that Christ entered into His glory through sufferings, and that the obligation is imposed upon

all Christians to suffer with Him. "We are joint heirs with Christ, yet so if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him." Rom. viii, 17. "It came to pass that the beggar Lazarus died, and he was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell." Lk. xvi, 22. Let us, accordingly, not expect to find heaven on earth.

*c.* Jesus Christ left His *foot-prints* on the spot whence He ascended. He had His face turned to the West, thus blessing our pagan forefathers. Let us be thankful by standing firm by Jesus in our age of infidelity.

3. The *manner* of the Ascension is thus described by the Evangelist: "And He led them out as far as to Bethania; and lifting up His hands, He blessed them. And it come to pass, whilst He blessed them, that He departed from them, and was carried up to heaven." Lk. xxiv, 50, 51.

*a.* Jesus blessed His disciples, not by mere pious wishes, but in reality. In consequence of this blessing, the Apostles were protected from the contamination of the world, and they preserved the unity of faith and the bond of charity, and, after a glorious martyrdom, entered into the joy of their Lord. We partake of this divine blessing through the ministry of the priesthood. It is especially at the close of the Holy Mass that Jesus renews His blessing, which, I hope, you will receive with due reverence, confidence, and devotion.

*b.* Jesus was not alone, He was surrounded by all the just of the Old Testament. "Ascending on high, He led captivity captive." Eph. iv, 8. By the bonds of charity He led captive the Saints of the Old Covenant. At the sight of the Celestial Jerusalem they must have exclaimed in an ecstasy of joy and admiration: "How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord" (Ps. lxxxiii, 2); whilst the angelic choirs, meeting their Incarnate God, hailed Him saying: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and benediction." Apoc. v, 12.

PART II.

For what purpose did Christ ascend into heaven.

For His own sake and for our sake.

1. Jesus celebrated His triumph as conqueror of hell and death, and took possession of the crown prepared by His virtues and merits. For His obedience to the Father: "My food is to do the will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work." John iv, 34. For His humility, which induced Him to be born in a stable, and to die on the cross. And for all His other virtues, of meekness, patience, fervor in prayer, love of poverty, His bounty and compassion. If our Heavenly Father rewards His just for a drink of water, His justice required that He should reward His Son also. Therefore, Jesus Himself said to His Heavenly Father: "I have glorified Thee upon the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had with Thee, before the world was." John xvii, 4, 5. Verily, for His self-abasement and obedience unto the death of the cross "God hath exhalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and in hell; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." Philp ii, 9–11.

2. Jesus Christ ascended into heaven for our sake also.

*a.* He opened the gates of heaven for us which, heretofore, had been closed even to the just. See Heb. ix, 7, 8. "In My Father's house there are many mansions * * * I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to Myself, that where I am, you also may be." John xiv, 2, 3. If we follow the Son of God, He will say to His Father: "Where I am, there also shall My minister be." John xii, 26.

*b.* Great as our frailty may be, the presence of our first-born brother encourages our hope. "God, Who is rich in mercy, * * hath quickened us together in Christ, and hath raised us up together; and hath made us sit together in the heavenly

places, in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii, 4–6. We possess two particular pledges of our hope: the first is, that in Christ God descended upon earth. Is it not a greater wonder that the king comes into the hut of his servant, than that the servant is admitted into the palace of the king? The second is, that our nature, our flesh, ascended to-day into heaven, and sitteth at the right of the Father.

*c.* Our hope should increase by reflecting that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven to be our intercessor. He is according to the Apostle, the High-Priest, "always living to make intercession for us." Heb. vii, 25. Jesus Himself assures us that He will ask the Father for us. John xiv, 16. Though we may have sinned most grievously, we shall find grace and mercy, if we sincerely repent of our trepasses. "My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin. But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just: and He is the propitiation for our sins." I John ii, 1.

*d.* Finally, Jesus Christ ascended into heaven to induce us to lift up our spiritual eyes and the desire of our hearts towards heaven. "Seek the things that are above; where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God." Col. iii, 1. Remember that poor leper whose cheerfulness increased with the increase of his dreadful malady, because he saw thus the coveted possession of heaven draw nearer and nearer.

*Peroration:* Sursum Corda! You are "pilgrims and strangers on the earth." Heb. xi, 13. Your home is heaven, where Christ is. But there is only one way leading to our home above, the way of the cross and Christian self-denial. Mt. xvi, 24. Millions have gone before us. "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me." Phil. iv, 13.

J. E. Zollner.

## II.
## THE TRIUMPH OF JESUS CHRIST.

Our Holy Mother, the Church, and the holy Fathers represent the ascension of Jesus Christ as a glorious triumph. And, truly, a triumph is was in every respect:

I. WITH REGARD TO HIM WHO ASCENDED.

1. Jesus ascends as a mighty *victor over the devil* and the dominion which He had maintained for a long time. "He divested principalities and powers, He made a show of them confidently, triumphing openly over them in Himself." Col. ii, 15. The angels of heaven are astonished at the splendor of the victor (Is. lviii, 1). They ascribe to Him all the characteristics of a triumphant hero:

*a. Beauty of garments:* "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra, this beautiful one in His robe?" Human nature, glorified in consequence of His victory, is the robe of Jesus Christ.

*b. Strength:* "Walking in the greatness of His strength." The flight of the enemies is a sufficient proof of the power of this conqueror. "In terror and confusion must the black and hideous army of devils have fled out of the atmosphere through which Christ ascended!" St. Bernardine.

*c. Judgment:* "I, that speak justice, and am a defender to save." He executes a judgment of righteous vengeance on His enemies, and a saving judgment upon His friends and followers.

2. Moreover, Jesus ascends as conqueror of the whole world, over which He acquired

*a.* A *material dominion:* by crushing under foot the power of its former master, the devil, the "prince of this world," Jesus became our Lord and Master. "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth." Mt. xxviii, 18. Thus He could with authority send His apostles into all parts of the world. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations."

*b.* A *moral dominion*, in as far as the Gentiles forsook their

gods and the laws of the flesh, to follow a crucified God and embrace the arduous obligations of Christian perfection.

3. As *redeemer* of the captives. "Ascending on high, He led captivity captive." Eph. iv, 3. Jesus redeemed those in the captivity of sin, as well as the captives in Limbo.

II. WITH REGARD TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS ASCENSION.

Even as to less important circumstances, a triumph is the symbol of Christ's Ascension, which was, however, the most magnificent of all triumphs. Points of similarity are:

1. The *countless attendance*, forming, what might be termed the "Triumphal Chariot of God."

2. The *universal exultation*. All nations are invited to praise God. "O clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of joy." Ps. xlvi, 2. The heavenly hosts rejoice at the triumphal entry of their king; the Apostles who, after the Ascension, "went back to Jerusalem with great joy" (Lk. xxiv, 52) on account of their Lord's victory. The whole world celebrates the Ascension of the Lord with great solemnity.

3. The *glorious entry* into heaven, foretold by Micheas (ii, 13): "Their king shall pass before them, and the Lord at the head of them." The gates of heaven were opened the first time; no one had ever entered heaven before. Human nature takes possession of the throne of the divinity, so that the angels, struck with amazement, inquired: "Who is this king of glory?"

4. The *liberal distribution* of precious gifts. "Ascending on high, He gave gifts to men," Eph. iv, 8, viz.: all heavenly treasures by the sending of the Holy Ghost. He ascended above all heavens, "that He might fulfill all things." Eph. iv, 10. And He gave us the banquet of His sacred body in the Most Blessed Sacrament, abiding with us all days to the consummation of the world.

A similar triumph is prepared for us also. Let frequent meditation on that blessed truth strengthen us for the combat and lead us to victory. Without combat no victory, without victory no triumph.

Mansi.

## Sixth Sunday After Easter.

### I.
### WHY THE WORLD CONTINUALLY PERSECUTES THE CHURCH.

"And these things they will do to you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me. But these things I have told you; that when the hour of them shall come, you may remember that I told you." From the fulfillment of this prophecy it is manifest that He Who made it foresaw the future. It has been fulfilled in the Apostles, whose struggles and sufferings St. Paul thus describes: "God hath set forth us Apostles, the last, as it were, men destinated to death; because we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. * * * We are made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all even till now." I Cor. iv, 9-13. This prophecy, however, was not intended for the Apostles only, but for the entire Church in all ages. And it has been fulfilled through all the centuries of her existence, from the bloody persecutions of the first ages up to the infernal machinations of our own days. What then is the reason of this uninterrupted persecution? Not to mention that thus in the Providence of God the truth and glory of the Church are manifested, I assign the following motives:

I. The Church is not a child of the world.

II. She combats the maxims of the world.

III. She cannot be crushed by the world.

#### PART I.

#### THE CHURCH IS NOT A CHILD OF THE WORLD, BUT HER ORIGIN IS FROM ABOVE.

I. The motive of the world's antagonism to the Church is not a conviction that she is deserving of hatred. What crimes has this daughter of heaven committed, she to whom the words describing the life of her bridegroom rightly apply: "Who went about doing good, and healing all. * * * For God was with Him,"

Act. x, 38. Even from a temporal point of view, the Church is the greatest benefactress of mankind. "If it had not been for the Church, Europe would have become a prey to the tyranny of despots, the theater of perpetual wars, or a wilderness for the Moguls." (Words of Herder, a Protestant.)

II. The true motive of the world's warfare against the Church is, because she is no child of the world. Like her divine Master, she descended to us from a better world, and hence endowed with a spirit opposed to the spirit of the world. John xv, 18, 19: "If the world hate you, know ye that it hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you have not been of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The world arose against our Saviour, in His tender infancy, and in His manhood, and after many persecutions crucified Him. "The servant is not greater than his lord." l. c. 20.

III. In accordance with this entirely different spirit, the efforts of the world are opposed to the efforts of the Church.

1. What the world aims at, St. John has explained in these few words: "If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life; which is not of the Father, but is of the world." I John ii, 15, 16. These are the three filthy and poisonous sources from which all desires of the children of the world originate.

2. The Church exhorts her children, if they wish to be living members of the sacred body of Jesus Christ, not to yield to the concupiscence of the flesh, nor to attach their hearts to perishable things, and to conquer pride by ready obedience to God and His representatives on earth.

IV. Therefore, the world will always be hostile to the Church. Charity and friendship cannot exist but between persons whose minds are united by the same spirit and the same pursuits. "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness, but to them that are

called * * the power of God, and the wisdom of God." I Cor. i, 23, 24. In this sense we understand the words of our Saviour: "Do not think that I am come to send peace upon earth; I came not to send peace, but the sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Mt. x, 34-36.

V. From this it follows (1) that a reconciliation between the world and Christ cannot be effected but by their giving up their respective spirits. The world must either cease to be the world, or the Church must cease to be the Church. Since neither contingency will ever arise, the enmity in question will last to the consummation of the world. (2) That this combat will grow the more fierce, the more the world will endeavor to accomplish its wicked designs. This is the explanation of the present warfare that is waged against the Church all over the world, because men ridicule the stern demands of the Church and represent them as incompatible with human nature. If the Church would give them up (the demands, to believe her mysteries, to obey our spiritual superiors, to confess our sins, to fast, etc.), men would soon be reconciled to her.

If you be hated on account of your Christian life, "rejoice and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in heaven." Mt. v, 12.

## PART II.

### THE CHURCH COMBATS THE MAXIMS OF THE WORLD.

I. The Church appears before the world with the intention of imposing upon men *the sweet yoke of Jesus Christ.* She appears in obedience to the word of Jesus Christ, Who said: "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Mt. xxviii, 18-20. "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven;

and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." l. c. xviii, 18. Is it surprising that the world should rise up against this claim of the Church, and the authority of her Founder, in the language of those rebellious citizens in the Gospel parable: "We will not have this man to reign over us?" Lk. xix, 14.

II. To all men without exception, whatever their state of life, the Church repeats *the demands of her Lord and Master.* She says with St. John to the *kings* and *mighty ones* of the earth: "It is not lawful for thee" (Mt. xiv, 4), and to the *subjects* she says with the Apostle: "Fear God, honor the King." I Pet. ii, 17. She says to the *rich:* "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Mt. xix, 24. She restrains the *poor* from violence, consoling them by the assertion of Jesus, that Lazarus, for having patiently borne his sufferings, was carried by the holy angels into Abraham's bosom. To the proud she says: "Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." She threatens *all sinners* with everlasting punishment. Now, man's nature is such that he feels indignant under reproach and correction. "You received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus," wrote St. Paul to the Galatians. "Where is then your blessedness? For, I bear you witness, that, if it could be done, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and would have given them to me. Am I then become your enemy in telling you the truth?" The great affection for the Apostle had vanished, since he had uttered a word of reproach.

Such is the fate of the Church.

III. The world in its assaults upon the Church is *aided by the devil*, the prince of the world, who trembles for his dominion on earth. * * * "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Mt. viii, 29. The devils, crying out in this manner, knew the power and glory of the Lord. Satan, knowing the power and glory of the Church, also, uses every effort to

maintain his dominion, by carrying on against her a ceaseless warfare.

Do not by a sinful life and an unchristian conduct wage war against your Holy Mother, the Church, lest your passions change you from children into enemies of the Bride of Christ.

PART III.

THE CHURCH CANNOT BE CONQUERED BY THE WORLD.

Generous combatants will never make use of *ignoble weapons.* * * The world, in its assaults upon the Church, employs the base weapons of misrepresentation, calumny, and brutal force. * * Historical lies on the lives of the popes, St. Bartholemew's night. * * False expositions of her doctrines. * * Calumnies against her dignitaries and religious institutions, etc. What is the explanation of this bitter, dishonorable, opposition? It is because her enemies know by an experience of eighteen centuries that the Church has always been victorious. And instead of recognizing the finger of God, they become only the more infuriated against her. But her strength and beauty were only renewed by the atrocious cruelty of the Jews, the bloody persecutions of the Gentiles, the schisms and heresies of faithless children, the pretensions of kings and emperors.

I. The beautiful life of Joseph of Egypt is a true figure of the life of the Church.

1. "Israel loved Joseph above all his sons, because he had him in his old age; and he made him a coat of divers colors. And his brethren, seeing that he was loved by his father more than all his sons, hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him." Behold the church and the world! The Church, being loved by God as His bride and mystical body, and clad in the brightest garment of His grace, is hated by the children of the world.

2. By wonderful visions our Lord revealed the future glory of His beloved Joseph, for which his brothers hated him the more. "Behold, the dreamer cometh. Come, let us kill him, and cast him into some old pit." V. 19, 21. And they would

have carried out their wicked purpose but for the exertions of Judas, his brother. The doctrines of our church and the promises made to her by her divine Founder, are mere idle dreams in the eyes of the world, and to prove them such—if it were possible—she shrinks from no cruelty. Yet the protecting brother has never been wanting.

3. After many trials, Joseph was received into the court of the king. P. xli, 42. At last his brothers, being on the point of starvation, took their refuge to him, and he saved them from death. When miseries and calamities overwhelm the nations in punishment of their crimes, the church is once more acknowledged and praised as the refuge and salvation of mankind.

*Peroration:* We have good reason to look confidently forward for the coming events. The greater the persecutions, the greater their benefits and blessings. "As only the woman of Cana touched our Lord, whilst the multitude pressed against Him, so the Church is pressed by many, touched by few." St. Augustine. Always side with the Church, and out of the struggle of this life she will lead us through a glorious victory to the imperishable glory of the eternal kingdom.

J. Ehrler.

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## II.

## ON HUMAN RESPECT.

"And you shall give testimony, because you are with Me from the beginning." Such was the commission given by Jesus to His Disciples. For the faithful discharge of this commission, Jesus foretells them, they will be put out of the synagogues. "Yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth a service to God." Their testimony should be a bloody testimony. And, indeed, the history of the Church amply verifies this prophecy of Jesus Christ. How manifold were the torments and tribulations which the Apostles, the Martyrs, and the other Saints, had to endure in the practice and profession of their holy faith! Our lot will be the same, it we try to be

faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. "And all who will live piously in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." II. Tim. iii, 12. And this is the very reason why so many are no true disciples of Jesus Christ; they wish to be on good terms with the world; they fear men.

## PART I.

### HUMAN RESPECT IS DISHONORABLE TO GOD.

The mere desire and readiness to please others induces many Christians to take part in sinful conversations, to yield to the wishes of others, not to profess their religion publicly and openly, not to practice certain exercises of devotion, etc. How incompatible this is with the service of God, we learn from His own mouth, when He says, Is. li, 12, 13: "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a mortal man, and of the son of man, who shall wither away like grass? And thou hast forgotten the Lord thy Maker, Who stretched out the heavens, and founded the earth." Let us dwell a little on these words of the Lord.

1. Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid? Thou art a Christian, but, because thou fearest men, thou art:

*a.* An *ungrateful* Christian, unmindful of the many blessings and graces received at the hands of God from the day of thy christening to this hour, by thy vocation, in the holy sacraments, by instructions, inspirations, etc. And, in spite of these great benefits, you place your God below man! What a shame if God must say of you also: "I was wounded in the house of them that loved Me." Zach. xiii, 6.

*b.* A *perjured* Christian, who swore the oath of allegiance to the Lord, and was signed with the sign of the Cross, but now betrays his Lord, for fear, not of torments and death, but of some contemptuous words, etc.!

2. "Of a mortal man, who shall wither away like grass." "Who, then, is he of whom you are afraid?

*a.* "A *mortal man*," therefore a weak, miserable creature, who is to-day and will vanish to-morrow. How insulting to God to value man's favor higher than His own.

*b.* "*Like grass*"—Therefore a frail, contemptible creature.

How much more despicable is a person, who is the cause of your being ashamed of faith and virtue! Yet, the applause of the wicked is dearer to you than the complacency and favor of God.

3. "And thou hast forgotten the Lord thy Maker," etc. No greater insult can be offered to God than to neglect Him for fear of men.

The *Creator*, to Whom you prefer the creature.

The *God of infinite Majesty*, "Who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth," with Whose praise the earth resounds, is less esteemed than the worm of the earth.

The *Lord*, on Whom we depend entirely, is placed below the servant, nay, below the rebel.

The *Holy* God, to Whom the sinner is preferred; for it is but the repetition of the disgrace inflicted on Jesus, when Barabbas was preferred to Him.

The *jealous* God, Who gives His honor to no one else; Who will revenge Himself.

## PART II.

### HUMAN RESPECT IS DISHONORABLE TO YOURSELF.

Without mentioning how ignominious it is before every honest man to sacrifice your convictions and principles on account of the vile fear of men: the greatest ignominy is awaiting you on the *Day of Judgment*. "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father, Who is in Heaven." Mt. x, 33. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His majesty, and of His Father's, and of the holy Angels." Lk. ix, 26.

I. What disgrace and confusion shall overwhelm such Christians before the tribunal of Christ!

1. The Eternal Judge will disclose all their follies and brand them before the whole world as cowards and deserters. In what splendor will then appear the Majesty of a despised God, and how despicable the littleness of those men whom they feared!

2. God will confront them with His Saints who acted like brave soldiers. Who can measure the confusion of the cowardly Christians at the sight of the holy confessors, amongst whom are even children, who in their confession of Jesus Christ despised both the sweetest enticements and the most cruel torments of the world; or, at the sight of St. John the Baptist, who, in spite of the prison and the sword of the executioner, said intrepidly: "It is not allowed," whilst they had not courage enough to encounter an angry look or a stern counten nce?

3. Jesus will deny them, will be ashamed of them, like a father who refuses to acknowledge an unruly and wayward son any longer as his own, and deprives him of all the rights and honors of a member of his family, etc.

4. Jesus will associate them with Judas and the devils.

II. How keenly and bitterly will they feel this ignominy. "They shall be a reproach among the dead forever." Wisd. iv, 19.

1. At the sight of the Saints, whom they had not the courage to follow, they will cry out: "We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honor." Wisd. v, 4. And at the sight of the angry Judge, they will "say to the mountains and the rocks: Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Apoc. vi, 16.

2. *Comparisons.* The sons of Jacob were terrified exceedingly when they heard their brother say: "I am Joseph, whom you sold." Saul trembled, when prostrate on the ground he heard the voice: "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest." How great will be your terror, when the Judge with angry looks will say to you: "I am thy Creator and Redeemer, to Whom thou hast preferred a miserable and sinful creature!"

*Peroration:* Now reflect and make your choice. Turn away from this fatal fear of men, which causes so many good works to be neglected, and so many sins to be committed.

Mentges.

## Whitsunday.

### I.

### THE DIFFERENT FORMS UNDER WHICH THE HOLY GHOST APPEARED.

We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, Who is true God, as the Father and the Son. He descended upon the Apostles on this day, the feast of Pentecost, in the form of fiery tongues, whilst, when Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan, He appeared in the form of a dove, and at the transfiguration of Jesus, as a bright cloud. These forms, under which the Holy Ghost appeared, are very significant, and expressive of important doctrines.

#### PART I.

#### WHEN JESUS WAS BAPTIZED THE HOLY GHOST, AS A DOVE, DESCENDED AND REMAINED UPON HIM.

For His choice of this form the following motives may be assigned:

1. *The dove is the emblem of purity.*

*a.* She loves cleanness. The dove sent forth by Noe out of the ark, not finding on the earth, covered with filth and decaying corpses, where her foot might rest, returned to him. The Holy Spirit finds no rest in a heart contaminated with sin. Like Noe, the Father in heaven sends forth this Dove out of the heavely Ark, but everywhere on the whole face of the earth, in every state of life, in every age and sex, He finds only the filth of sin.

*b.* Jesus has restored to us the purity and innocence, of which sin had deprived us, by communicating to the water the miraculous power of purifying and sanctifying our souls, and transforming them into temples of the Holy Ghost. The words (Ps. l, 12): "Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit within my bowels," have been fulfilled, and therefore

the Holy Ghost appeared at the baptism of our Saviour in the pure form of a dove.

*c.* Ever since the dove has been the emblem of a saintly soul. The tombs of the virgins, in the catacombs, were ornamented with the picture of the dove, those of the martyrs with palm branches. In some instances, holy souls departing this life were seen under this form; as, for instance the soul of the holy virgin Scholastica. At the funeral of St. Oswald, bishop of Worcester, whom death found, when, according to his custom, he washed the feet of the poor, a dove, white as snow, was seen soaring down from heaven and with her wings protecting the corpse (Surius, 15th of October).

2. *The dove is an emblem of the Church.*

*a.* Like the dove, the Church is *pure and undefiled.* Her doctrines, as well as her life, inculcate and present the most perfect model of true purity of heart; she is the bride of Christ, without blemish. "Christ loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 25.

*b.* Like the dove, the Church is a *messenger of peace.* The dove sent forth by Noe "carried in her mouth a bough of an olive tree, with green leaves." The Holy Ghost, by coming down upon Jesus, designated Him as the Prince of Peace. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me; wherefore He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor." Lk. iv, 18. The Church has been commissioned by Jesus Christ to carry the bough of the olive tree, the emblem of peace with God, to the nations, and to preach, after Him, the gospel to the poor.

PART II.

AT THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS CHRIST, THE HOLY GHOST APPEARED AS A BRIGHT CLOUD.

According to Holy Writ the cloud is an emblem of divine grace. The Holy Ghost is the cloud, by the over-shadowing

which the Blessed Virgin conceived. This cloud led the Israelites to the Promised Land; it is the "swift cloud" (Is xix, 1), "on which the Lord entered Egypt, and the idols of Egypt were moved at His presence; faith and virtue flourished. Grace is appropiately compared to a cloud, for the latter

1. *Contains water*, by which grace is often represented in Holy Scripture. Like water, grace purifies, quenches thirst, imparts fresh vigor. "I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh." Joel ii, 28. "He that shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall not thirst for ever, but * * * shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into everlasting life." John iv, 13.

2. *It contains rain.* This rain, the grace of the Holy Ghost pouring down upon men, was

*a.* *Foretold.* "Thou shalt set aside for thy inheritance free rain, O God." Ps. lxvii, 10. After the fall of this rain, which was set aside, or especially given, to the Church of God, she produced a plentiful harvest of Saints. Martyrs came forth like red roses; Virgins, like snow-white lilies; the Confessors, like spring flowers; cloisters and convents, like fragrant violets.

*b.* It was *prefigured* by the "little cloud arising out of the sea like a man's foot," observed by the boy of Elias on the top of mount Carmel. The three years, during which heaven was shut up, signify the three ages: the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the age of the Prophets. The cloud signifies Jesus Christ, Who, ascending into heaven, sent down upon the dry earth the Holy Ghost with the refreshing rain of His graces.

*c.* This *rain was poured out indeed* on the day of Pentecost, three thousand being first added to the number of the disciples (Act ii, 41), and then five thousand, at the preaching of the prince of the Apostles.

3. It contains *dew.* Divine grace resembles dew. "As the dew of Hermon, which descendeth upon Mount Sion. For there the Lord hath commanded blessing, and life for evermore." Ps. cxxxii, 3. Hermon, meaning "sublime light," signifies Christ "the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh

into this world." John i, 9. Sion means the Church founded upon a rock. This dew, may, therefore, be the abundant grace of the Holy Ghost, poured, after the ascension of Jesus Christ, by the "Father of lights" upon the Apostles gathered together on Sion.

PART III.

ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST THE HOLY GHOST APPEARED UNDER THE FORM OF FIERY TONGUES.

1. Fire is of all elements the most *communicative*, transforming objects to its own resemblance. The Holy Ghost, manifesting and imparting Himself through divine charity, produces these same effects in the Christian soul. The Apostles, after receiving this heavenly fire, spoke words of fire which, as the words of Elias, "burnt like a torch." Eccles. xlviii, 1. The Apostles spread this fire over the whole world. The Holy Ghost has enkindled this holy fire in the hearts of Apostolic men at all times and ages of the Church. St. Vincent Ferrer, whose preaching vast multitudes of divers nationalties understood, converted eight thousand Mahomedans and twenty thousand Jews, not to mention the many thousand Christians whom he induced to lead a new life. St. Antony of Padua converted by his preaching so many souls, that after his death God glorified him by preserving his tongue entire and as fresh as the tongue of a living man. St. Bonaventura took it devoutly into his hands, and kissing it said: "O blessed tongue, which incessantly praised God and was the cause of others praising Him, now thy merits are known before Him who made thee for the purpose of being employed in the noble work of preaching His holy word!"

2. The Holy Ghost intended to insinuate that He had come to *heal our tongues*, being "on fire by hell." "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of our nativity, being set on fire by hell." James iii, 6. Therefore the Living Fire came down from heaven, to heal the wound of our tongue and take away its poison. Let us entertain an ardent desire for this fire of the

Holy Ghost, "which burns, but not consumes, which purifies the sons of Levi" (Mal. iii, 3), and tries the gold of charity which our Lord Himself counsels us to buy of Him. Apoc. iii, 18.

*Peroration:* Fire was kept burning by God's command without interruption on the altar of the temple. By fire He showed the complacency He took in the sacrifices offered to Him. At the sacrifice of Abraham, "there appeared a smoking furnace, and a lamp of fire." Gen. xv, 17. When Elias offered up the holocaust, "the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed it." III Kings xviii, 38. May the fire of divine charity incessantly burn in your hearts! For, "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?" Lk. xii, 49. The Holy Ghost is the substantial fire sent by the Father and Son into our hearts, to enkindle them with divine love. Lay no obstacle in the way of the Holy Ghost by sin or lukewarmness.

Jacob Marchant.

## II.

## SANCTIFYING GRACE ELEVATES A MAN TO THE HIGHEST DIGNITY AND CONFERS UPON HIM THE GREATEST HAPPINESS.

"If any one love Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make an abode with him." John xiv, 23.

King Saul had promised, that he who would slay the giant Goliath, should receive three rewards: great wealth, his own daughter, and freedom from taxation. In to-day's Gospel Jesus Christ offers us for the performance of a less arduous task an infinitely greater reward. If we love Him, His Father will love us, by which words God proposes to us to be our father; and the Three Persons of the adorable Trinity will come to us, *i. e.*, we are invited to be their guests. And what is above all human expectation, God Himself promises to espouse to Himself our immortal soul. "We will make an abode with Him." And all this is imparted to us by Sanctifying Grace. Is it not mortifying to human feeling, that in spite of such promises there are so

many who refuse to love God? To inflame their hearts with divine love, I will endeavor with the grace of the Holy Ghost, to enumerate and give some manner of an estimate of the proposed rewards.

PART I.

SANCTIFYING GRACE MAKES MAN A CHILD OF GOD.

1. This dignity is insinuated by the words of the Gospel: "And my Father will love Him," which love is no less than a true father's love. St. John the Evangelist giving the interpretation: "Behold what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be named and should be the sons of God." I John iii, 1. It is for the same reason that the Son of God teaches us to pray: "Our Father who art in heaven." If God calls us His children, it is not an empty sound, or an ostentatious title; but we are truly God's children. The reason is, because by sanctifying grace we are, in some sense, made partakers of the divine nature, and obtain a striking resemblance to God, wherefore St. Peter says: "He hath given us very great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature." II Pet. i, 4. In the language of St. Bernard, grace is the ray of divine holiness and justice, deifying, as it were, our souls. And as the ray of the sun, when falling upon a mirror, represents the sun himself, thus grace represents God in the soul of man. Therefore, as every father loves his son, on account of his resemblance to himself, so God loves every man adorned with sanctifying grace, on account of his similarity to His own blessed nature. Who is God, and who is man, that he should be found worthy of being loved by God? It is a great dignity, indeed, for wretched man to be called "son" by God Himself, and a great happiness at the same time; "for if sons," says the Apostle, "we are heirs also, and co-heirs of Christ." Grace is the seed of eternal glory.

2. God takes special care of His children, even here on earth. If God loves the just man as His son, should He not bless him during his earthly life? If parents provide for their children, even concerning their future welfare, should our

Heavenly Father do less for us? Truly, our Lord sometimes sends us hardships as though they were presents from His paternal hand, and sometimes even chastisements. Yet, do not you send your boy to school, because you know education to be necessary for him, though he may not understand its importance? And if you deem it necessary to chastise him, is it not paternal affection that makes you take the rod? Indeed, with God, loving us and taking care of us, is one and the same. Therefore the two sisters of Lazarus sent to Jesus saying: "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest, is sick." John xi, 3. They said not: Come!—the mere message to Jesus seemed enough to them. "It is sufficient," says St. Augustine; "Thou knowest it: for, with Thee it cannot happen that Thou shouldst love without helping." Moreover, all that belongs to God, belongs to us also: "All I have is thine," said the father of the Gospel to his son. Lk. xv, 31. He who has the happiness of possessing the grace of God, possesses a great treasure wherewith to buy everything, and, therefore, he is infinitely rich: "The grace of God is everlasting life." Rom. vi, 23.

PART II.

BY SANCTIFYING GRACE GOD IS THE CHRISTIAN'S GUEST, AND THE CHRISTIAN IS GOD'S GUEST.

1. "And We will come to him." God will visit us, and we shall visit Him in return. How great is this honor conferred on us! The Centurion did not consider himself worthy that the Lord should enter under his roof. John the Baptist, though the greatest of Saints, exclaimed: "I ought to be baptized by Thee; and comest Thou to me?" Mt. iii, 14. The *happiness* is equal to the honor. God entering the soul to abide in her, comes not empty-handed. The God who at the entrance of Jacob, the just man, blessed the house of Laban, should not bless the soul He enters Himself personally? He gives us an abundance of virtues, and a fountain of living water, springing up into everlasting life. (John iv, 14). This fountain of living water is, according to St. Ambrose, the Holy Ghost, from Whom the water of grace comes

to us, enabling our soul to bring forth works meritorious for heaven.

2. The Holy Ghost, entering our soul, *sanctifies* her by performing in her and with her what is conducive to her salvation. In our soul He is the father in His own house; He instructs, fosters and cultivates her, as a gardner cultivates his garden. As king He governs His kingdom. Like the bright sun, He imparts to her light and warmth, and as the soul animates the body, so the Holy Ghost gives and preserves the supernatural life of the soul. What could be more desirable than to have for your guest an all-wise master, an all-powerful king, and the most vigilant guardian? "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me." Phil. iv, 13. He illuminates our understanding, inflames our will, He elevates us from earth to heaven. Like a cloud, under which form He appeared at the transfiguration of Jesus Christ, He guards us from the burning lust of the flesh and mitigates the vehemence of our passions. St. Paul, in the fire of temptations, heard the voice: "My grace suffices thee." Like a vehement wind, He moves our will to practice what our faith teaches, and to avoid what conscience forbids, that so we may exclaim in the words of David: "I lifted up my hands to Thy commandments, which I loved; and I was exercised in Thy justifications." Ps. cxviii, 48.

## PART III.

### BY SANCTIFYING GRACE OUR SOUL IS ELEVATED TO THE DIGNITY OF A SPOUSE OF GOD.

This doctrine is insinuated by the words: "We will make an abode with him." God comes to us, not like a wanderer into the harbor, which He is to leave after a short stay; but He remains with us by the *gratia inhabitans* of His Holy Spirit, giving us thus a special pledge of eternal glory, provided we do not lose it again by our own fault. Osee. ii, 19. God says in plain words: "I will espouse thee to Me for ever." How great is the dignity of being espoused to God! Hear David, after his victory over Goliath, exclaim: "Who am I, that I should become the son-in-

law of the king?" How much greater is the honor of being a spouse of God! And how great are the advantages resulting from this dignity!

1. God is united with the soul of the just as His spouse *for ever*, so that she can never be separated from Him, except she become unfaithful. For thus says the Lord: "I swore to thee, and I entered into a covenant with thee; and thou becamest Mine." Osee. xvi, 8. In testimony whereof the soul wears a ring, *i. e.*, the grace of God, which is the pledge of eternal glory. God is faithful to the soul, and He requires of her this unchangeable fidelity also. This was the great consolation of the martyrs. If the tyrants deprived them of all things, their life not excepted, of their God they could not deprive them. But if a soul is unmindful of her pledge, God may reproach her, as Thamar reproached Judas: "Know thou, to whom the ring belongs."

2. If our soul is God's spouse, she must *be clothed by Him.* Indeed, He clothes her with the variegated garment of His grace, in which adornment she appears so beautiful, that St. Catharine of Sienna, after having seen the beauty of a soul in the state of grace, said to her father confessor: "O Father, if it were granted to you to behold a soul in the garment of sanctifying grace, you would, for the salvation of your soul, desire to be subject to all afflictions, pains and torments, and to suffer death, not only once, but repeatedly." This supernatural beauty shed a radiance even over the countenances of many Saints, as the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Stephen, St. Agnes, St. Cecilia, St. Philip Neri, St. Ignatius, St. Stanislaus Kostka.

3. The soul espoused to God must *rejoice* with the bridegroom. "Can the children of the bridegroom mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them?" Mt. ix, 15. So are those living in the state of grace ever joyful and at peace, refreshed and comforted by their bridegroom through interior inspirations and consolations.

*Peroration:* If such be the dignity, the riches and advantages of sanctifying grace, who should not make the greatest efforts towards loving God and holding in detestation all kinds of

sins and vices? He Whom we are commanded to love with our whole heart, is the most amiable Father; He is the supreme sovereign good itself. God will reward our love toward Him by loving us in return. He will be our Father, and we are to be His children, whom He has promised never to forsake. He will be our guest, never to leave us, and will provide all things necessary for our temporal and eternal welfare. He will be our bridegroom to espouse us to Himself for all eternity. He will make us partakers of His imperishable kingdom, to which He Himself may lead us all. Amen.

M. Faber.

## Trinity Sunday.

### I.

### THE MYSTERY OF THE MOST BLESSED TRINITY, THE GREATEST HOMAGE OF FAITH, THE MOST SOLID GROUND OF HOPE, AND THE STRONGEST MOTIVE OF CHARITY.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Mt. xxviii, 19. Such is in three words the substance of our faith, the ground of our religion, the mark of our confession, and the greatest and most sublime of our mysteries. What am I to say to you about the inscrutable, adorable Trinity! When the word of the Lord came to Jeremias, he said: "I cannot speak, for I am a child." How much more reason have I to consider myself a child, unable to speak of the most sublime mystery of our religion? I will, therefore, confine myself to presenting this august subject for your edification, by reminding you that the mystery of the most Blessed Trinity is the greatest homage of Faith, the most solid ground of Hope, and the most urgent motive of Charity.

#### PART I.

#### THE GREATEST HOMAGE OF FAITH.

1. By believing in this mystery, we believe in the most incomprehensible of all mysteries, and, consequently, we pay to God the greatest homage. For, I can have no sublimer conception of God, than by professing Him absolutely incomprehensible. The greatest honor we can pay Him is this: "O, my God, I cannot comprehend Thee. If the faculties of the souls of all men, if the sublime intellects of the Angels and Archangels were given to me, I should never comprehend Thy divinity, and my knowledge would be as far from Thee as that which is finite is from the infinite. If I could comprehend Thee, Thou wouldst

be no longer what Thou art, and I should be no longer what I am."

But now, in no mystery of our holy religion is God further removed from our comprehension than in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. What else do we know respecting this adorable mystery but that we know nothing? Therefore, the holy prophets, to whom this mystery was first revealed, called it a light which no one is allowed to approach.

Does it not follow that I am not able to exalt God's supreme being better and more highly than by believing in the unapproachable Trinity?

2. We sacrifice to Him the noblest faculty of our nature, our intellect, by believing a mystery, of which we could not have the least idea before God revealed it to us. We make this sacrifice in the most perfect manner, by believing merely on divine authority, as investigation by ourselves is useless, nay impossible, whilst in regard to other mysteries, such as the Incarnation, our faith is confirmed by the exercise of our intellect.

Mind, however, that we believe in a Trinity, whose proper and essential character is sanctity, and that, in order to be His worthy adorers in spirit and in truth, we must ourselves be striving towards sanctity. "For the Father seeketh such to adore Him." John iv, 23. He is the Holy God, and He wants holy souls to adore Him. The first angel was not holy, and the God of sanctity will rather be blasphemed by him in hell than praised in heaven. It is not likely that He should in His dealings with man adopt a different course.

## PART II.

### IT IS THE MOST SOLID GROUND OF OUR HOPE.

1. Without faith, no salvation. Which is the most necessary article of faith? The belief in the Most Blessed Trinity, so that no one can be saved, except he knows and believes (1) that there are Three Persons in one God, and (2) that the Second Divine Person has become man for us. This is so true that no missionary laboring among the heathen nations has a right, the case of extreme necessity not excepted, to baptize a person hav-

ing the use of reason, before he be instructed in these two articles of faith. It is for this reason that you commence the religious instruction of your dear little ones by teaching them to believe in the mystery most difficult to believe, in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Therefore God treats us, as St. Chrysostom says, in the same manner as He once treated His servant Abraham. "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only-begotten son for My sake, I will bless thee." Gen. xxii, 15. In a similar way God says to the Christian: "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast sacrificed thy greatest earthly good, thy intellect, and hast not spared thy only-begotten son; I will bless thee, give thee abundant graces, will adopt thee for My child, and sanctify and glorify thee. For this faith, which thou hast confessed, is the mustard seed of the Gospel, which, after having taken root in the heart, will extend its branches toward heaven, and produce fruits of glory to be reaped in eternity.

2. Can it still surprise you that, according to Christ's command, the profession of faith "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" is made use of in the administration of most of the Sacraments? When we were born again by baptism, it was in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When we were strengthened by the grace of Confirmation, it was in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. When our sins are forgiven in the Confessional, it is in the name etc. When the young Levites, prostrate at the foot of the altar, receive the powers of the priesthood, it is in the name etc. When the nuptial tie is blessed, it is in the name etc. When the priest or bishop blesses you, it is in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. From this we must learn, says St. Augustine, that in Christianity no grace, no justification, no salvation, is to be expected except through faith in the Most Blessed Trinity.

3. Hence it is that, following a pious tradition, we put this profession of faith at the beginning of all our actions, by making

the sign of the cross, when we begin, or continue, or finish our daily work for heaven. We have inherited this tradition from the Apostles. What could be more in accordance with Christian feeling than to invoke the Most Blessed Trinity and at the commencement of every work to make upon our foreheads the sign of the cross?

4. The Church herself fosters and encourages this pious custom. In this holy name she begins the tremendous sacrifice, and she closes all her prayers in the same holy name; she sings no psalm or hymn without the conclusion: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. She makes us, who minister at her altars, repeat this trisalogy more than a hundred times every day, for she well knows the power of this prayer. Would we might always pronounce these holy names with ardent devotion! How great would be our merits accumulated through a life time! They are names of salvation, and, therefore, worthy of our attention and affection. Listen to what I have to say now. When the priest will assist our expiring soul, he will use these holy names as his principal weapon. "Go forth, O Christian soul," the minister of the Church will say, "in the name of God the Father almighty, Who created thee; in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, Who suffered for thee; in the name of the Holy Ghost, Who was poured out upon thee." Powerful names, to banish the evil spirits! And, moreover, the faith in the Blessed Trinity is the last appeal to divine mercy." For, although he hath sinned, he hath not denied the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but hath believed." You see, then, clearly that the belief in the Most Adorable Trinity is the most solid ground of our hope.

## PART III.

### IT IS THE MOST URGENT MOTIVE OF CHARITY.

1. The faith in the most Blessed Trinity is the *bond* of brotherly love, as St. Paul wrote to the faithful: "I, therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you, walk worthily of the vocation in which you are called, * * * supporting one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of

peace." And what reason does he assign? Because you have one God, one faith, one baptism. Therefore, you are one body, which is the Church. Is it, then, not fair and just to have one spirit also? "One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all." Eph. iv, 1. Is it not sad that, though we are children of one father, we should be to one another as if we were strangers? Though brethren of the one Son of God, that there is no sign of brotherly love? Though animated by the same Holy Spirit, that there is so much dissension among us? Cf. I Cor. i, 13-15.

2. The most Adorable Trinity is the *model* of brotherly love. If in other sermons I have reminded you of the commandment given by Jesus, to love one another, as He has loved us (John xiii, 34), I am called upon to-day to propose to you a higher model, the love of the Three Divine Persons to one another. "Look, and make it according to the pattern." Ex. xxv, 40. Which pattern? Jesus Christ Himself has shown it. "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me; that they be one, as We also are." John xvii, 11. Happy families, where parents and children reflect on this divine prayer! Happy congregations, with which the word is verified: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Ps. cxxxii, 1.

*Peroration:* What would St. Paul say, if he were witness of your dissensions, envy, calumnies, and discord, even in the same family? O God of love and peace, Thou art able to give us true peace. Almighty Father, Thou hast formed our hearts, and canst lead them whithersoever Thou pleasest. Eternal Son, consubstantial with the Father, Thou hast given us the commandment of charity. Holy Ghost, Thou art the substantial love of the Father and the Son, and through Thee true love is poured out upon our souls. O, most Adorable Trinity, unite us in this world, that we may be united in heaven in Thy bosom, whence we have all proceeded.

Bourdaloue.

## II.

## WHY WE HOPE FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH, AND WHAT WE SHOULD DO TOWARDS PROMOTING IT.

On Trinity Sunday, when we Christians are called upon to return fervent thanks for having been baptized and called to the true faith, we should, on the one hand, think with grief of the millions who, deprived of baptism and faith, sit in the darkness of infidelity and idolatry; on the other hand, we should with a thankful and joyful heart acknowledge the successful efforts of the Catholic Church, in extending, according to her divine commission, the kingdom of God over the whole globe, and in announcing to all nations the good tidings of salvation. Let us, then, rejoice, in our well-founded hope for the propagation of our holy religion; but, at the same time, let us make earnest efforts, and labor for the realization of this blessed hope.

### PART I.

### UPON WHAT GROUNDS OUR HOPE FOR THE PROPAGATION OF OUR FAITH IS FOUNDED.

It is founded:

I. *On the divine origin of the Church.*

1. It is not the hands of men that have established the Church; it is the work of God. "Upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Mt. xvi, 18. Therefore, the Apostle does not hesitate to address the faithful: "You are fellow-citizens with the Saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." Eph. ii, 19.

2. The Lord has founded His Church, not for some few chosen nations, but for the whole human family. "Go ye, and teach all nations," was the general commission given to the Apostles. Indeed, as good water, having no particular taste, is adapted to every climate and every race, so are the doctrines

and institutions of the Catholic faith, being free from any national taste, adapted to all countries and nations.

II. *On divine promises.*

1. In the Old Testament God is introduced as addressing the Messiah: "Behold, I have given Thee to be the light of the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation even to the farthest part of the earth." Isa. xlix, 6. And because all nations are to adore the true God, "My house shall be called the house of prayer for all nations." Isa. lvi, 7. Vide lx, 4-13.

2. In the New Testament Christ Himself says: "And other sheep I have that are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be made one fold and one Shepherd." John x, 16. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations; and then shall the consummation come." Mt. xxiv, 14.

III. *On the magnificent victories*, which the Church has gained up to this day. She triumphed over Judaism and Paganism, as well as over all heresies.

1. Mockery and derision, cruel, bloody persecutions were stirred up by hell, in order to destroy the Church. It was, however, in vain. She remained victorious, gaining continually a firmer footing, until at the beginning of the fourth century her churches were surmounted by the cross, the emblem of our salvation.

2. Heretics arose, and gained many partisans, striving to ruin the Church. They succumbed in the unequal combat, their sects disappeared; but the Church with renewed strength pursued her heavenward course.

3. In our own times, also, the efforts and sacrifices of our zealous missionaries are blessed, so that we must say: "The Lord co-operated with them, confirming their doctrine by frequent conversions."

## PART II.

### WHY, AND HOW WE SHOULD PROMOTE THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH.

I. We are obliged to take an interest in spreading our holy faith. This is demanded of us:

1. By the dignity of the Catholic religion, being the only divine, true, and saving church.

2. By the honor of Jesus Christ, Who is her divine founder. If we love Jesus Christ, we should promote His honor.

3. By Christian charity, the infidels being our brethren, destined for the same celestial happiness, redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

4. By the will of God, who commands the children to assist their mother in all laudable undertakings. God makes the propagation of the faith dependent on the co-operation of men.

5. By our duty of gratitude, our heathen ancestors having received the light of faith through holy men coming from distant countries, exposed to the greatest hardships and trials, to the danger of death, and to death itself.

6. By the example of the early Christians, and also those of later centuries, who greatly contributed to the spread of our holy religion.

7. Reflect on the divine promises made to those assisting the ministers of the Gospel. Vide Mt. xix, 40; Lk. x, 5.

8. Take an example even from the heretics, who expend millions of dollars in supporting their missionaries, and in circulating the bible, though they see no satisfactory result. And what money and means do they employ to pervert needy Catholics!

II. We are able to assist in the propagation of the faith. Only few receive the vocation and mission to labor in it as missionaries. But every one can and must assist these few:

1. By frequent and fervent prayer for the infidels and heretics, and for the missionaries working in their midst. Say with devotion the second petition of the Lord's prayer: "Thy kingdom come." Rom. xv, 30; Col. iv, 3.

2. By your good example, by a truly Catholic life. If our morals would equal those of the early Christians, we should greatly contribute toward edifying and converting heretics. I Thess. iv, 11; I Pet. ii, 12. The bad morals of the Catholics were and are still a great obstacle in the way of the propagation of the faith in America, Asia, and in all other countries.

3. By material assistance; by alms—deeds, and contributions to missionary societies. How much good is done in this way in America, Asia, and among the Protestants of Northern Europe! How many dollars, now spent for useless and even sinful purposes, could be deposited in God's own treasury to be applied to the purchase of heaven!

*Peroration:* We are children of the Church. Let us prove ourselves worthy of this blessing and honor by zeal for our religion and by a virtuous life; and by fervent prayers and a lively interest in the missionary associations let us contribute our part towards the early fulfillment of the word, that there shall be one fold and one Shepherd.

Fr. Ehmig.

## Corpus Christi.

### GREAT HOMAGE IS DUE TO THE SACRED BODY OF JESUS CHRIST, AND ACTUALLY PAID ON THIS DAY OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

"My flesh is meat indeed." John vi, 56. It was in these words that our Saviour extolled the wonderful powers of His most sacred body. Although material flesh, it has the power of imparting grace to us, of giving us a supernatural, spiritual life, of cleansing and sanctifying our souls! A miraculous flesh indeed! O, Blessed Virgin, by thy pure affection for this divine flesh formed from thy virginal flesh, and by thy celestial love for the Holy Ghost, through whose miraculous operation this Corpus Christi—this body of Christ—was formed in thy virginal womb, lay thy words, O tender Mother, in my mouth, that worthily and becomingly I may speak on the honor conferred upon thy Son's most sacred body by becoming the true meat of our souls in the Blessed Sacrament.

I. GREAT HOMAGE IS DUE TO THE SACRED BODY OF JESUS CHRIST:

1. Because of its personal union with the Son of God. The intimacy of this union is emphatically expressed by St. John in these words: "The Word was made flesh." Therefore, we must acknowledge that this flesh, taken from the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and hidden in this our tabernacle, is the flesh of God. As God has become man, so this flesh has become the flesh of God. From this we infer that there is no homage too great to be paid to this Sacred Flesh of Jesus Christ.

2. There is so much more reason to honor this Divine Flesh, because it was so deeply abased by the Sacred Passion. This Venerable Flesh was scourged for our sake, and profaned by the hands of the executioners; in short, it bore, as it were, and paid the price of our Redemption. Our own Jesus sacrificed it on the altar of the cross. Although holy, "He made it

a curse." Therefore it was but just to exalt it in proportion to the depth of its humiliation. And exalted He has His Divine Flesh by the institution of the Blessed Sacrament.

II. Verily, the Holy Eucharist confers more honor upon the Divine Flesh of Jesus Christ than all the other glorious mysteries of this God-man. Great was the glory and splendor of this Sacred Flesh, when it arose from the sepulchre; but far greater is its glory and splendor in the Blessed Sacrament. For, our own body, the body of mere creatures, will, after our resurrection, have in common with the glorious body of Jesus Christ those stupendous qualities of being impassible, bright, agile, and subtle. But only the flesh of God Himself can be the food and nourishment of souls, of spirits, as is the Adorable Flesh of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Whilst in the course of nature the spirit animates the flesh, in this Blessed Sacrament the flesh animates the spirit, and serves as meat for the preservation of its supernatural life. Hear the beautiful words of St. Ambrose: "When the Son of God," he says, "spoke to the Jews of this miraculous food, He said not, '*I* am meat indeed,' but He said: 'My *flesh* is meat indeed.' It is not directly His soul, nor His Godhead which He gives us as nourishment for our souls, but it is His flesh. Soul and divinity are in the Blessed Sacrament per concomitantiam.

How great an honor has God conferred upon the flesh of His Son in this, that it renders us spiritual, that it imparts divine grace, and makes us live the life of God Himself! The Church expresses this effect, produced by the Adorable Flesh of Jesus Christ, in the words used in distributing the Holy Eucharist: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ may guard thy soul unto life everlasting." Let us rejoice over this admirable exaltation of Christ's body! In the order of nature the soul guards and preserves the body, in the order of grace the body guards and preserves our soul.

III. Should we still be surprised at God exposing this Sacred body in our temples for our adoration? Should we not adore the Divine Flesh which is the source of our life and of our immortality? And where could we have better motives for adoring it than in

this Blessed Sacrament? For, here it nourishes our soul. In instituting the feast of Corpus Christi, the Church was led by the same motive of promoting the worship of this Most Adorable Flesh. The festivity has the peculiar solemnity, that the body of Jesus Christ is carried in procession either outside or within the walls of the Church. On what is this ceremony founded? It is founded on solid and beautiful reasons.

1. Jesus Christ is carried about in commemoration of His carrying Himself in His own sacred hands, when giving His Body and Blood to the Apostles at the Last Supper. By this grand action He achieved the greatest triumph, of which mystery the Church reminds us this day by having the Blessed Sacrament carried about by the anointed hands of the priests.

2. And why is Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament carried outside of the church, through public streets and thoroughfares? In order to thank Him for having traveled through the cities and villages of Palestine doing good: "He went about doing good." Act. x, 38. Because Joseph in a time of famine had provided all Egypt with bread, King Pharao made him ascend a chariot and be conveyed through all the provinces of his kingdom, that every one might prostrate himself before him. Because the Son of God has given us the supersubstantial bread, the Church carries Him on a throne, to be adored by the faithful. Besides, the Church intends to make a solemn profession of her faith against heretics and infidels.

3. She wishes to give satisfaction for all the offences and outrages committed against this Blessed Sacrament. Yes, my brethren, the Church has instituted this feast for our sake, as a penance, that we may atone for our sins committed against our greatest treasure. It is for the scandal given in church, for sacrilegous communions received, for masses said by unworthy priests, etc.

*Peroration*: In compliance with the desire of the Church, honor the Most Adorable Flesh of the Saviour. Follow Mary Magdalen, who anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with her hair. John xii, 3. Love the beauty of the tabernacle where

the Flesh, the redemption for our sins, dwells, and instead of satisfying your exorbitant vanity, adorn this tent of the true Emmanuel. At the solemn procession say with the spouse in the Canticles: "I sought Him Whom my soul loveth; I sought Him and found Him not (in His usual abode). I will rise and will go about the city; in the streets and the broad ways I will seek Him Whom my soul loveth. * * * I found Him Whom my soul loveth; I held Him, and I will not let Him go, till I bring Him into my mother's house." Cant. iii, 1.

Bourdaloue.

## Second Sunday after Pentecost.

### I.

### HOLY COMMUNION THE BREAD OF LIFE.

By the great supper made by the Lord, to which we all are invited, we may understand the life-giving banquet of Holy Communion, by which the children of the Church are prepared to partake of the never-ending banquet in heaven. For Holy Communion is the bread of life. Let me invite you to meditate on this celestial banquet under this view. Holy Communion is

I. The most nutritious bread.

II. The most delicious bread.

III. The most strengthening bread.

#### I. HOLY COMMUNION THE MOST NUTRITIOUS BREAD.

Jesus says of the Heavenly Father who prepared the great supper: "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven," John vi, 13, adding: "My flesh is meat indeed * * * As I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me." V. 5, 6. Now, if it be a spiritual bread, it will produce, as St. Thomas Aqu. says, the same effect in the soul as material meat in the body. And if it be the best bread, it will produce these effects in a high degree. How is it then that we witness so often the contrary? No doubt, the body of the Lord is the most nutritious bread.

Life and health need nutrition. Why is it then that there are so many to whom the bread of life is not nutritious food, but deadly poison? Because they refuse to comply with certain necessary conditions. It is true they eat this bread, but

1. They are dead when they eat it.

In the state of mortal sin, after sacrilegious confessions, they eat this bread of life, and yet they are surprised at this "Sacrament of the living" not nourishing the dead, not strengthening the spiritual life which is lost!

*a. Comparisons.* The Gentiles had, in compliance with a

superstitious tradition, put the most delicious meat upon the sepulchres of the dead, or even in their mouths. But the dead remained dead, and the food could not profit them. Jesus commanded to give the daughter of Jairus something to eat, after He had raised her from the dead.

*b. Examples.* After Judas had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. John xiii, 27.—Jesus complained of Judas that by a kiss, the sign of love, he betrayed Him. The guest who had no nuptial garment, was not allowed to partake of the supper.

*c. Words of Scripture.* "Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," etc. I Cor. xi, 27–30; cf. l. c. x, 21.

2. Or, their soul is in a morbid and languid condition.

This state interferes with the process of nutrition. I do not mean to speak of the inherent frailty of all men, which is weakened by Holy Communion, but of willfull defects, such as

*a. Defective devotion.* As bodily food, however wholesome it may be, nourishes only if well digested. so for the efficacy of Holy Communion the opus operantis is of great importance

*b. Daily faults.* There is no effort made tow rd correcting them. Though they may not kill the soul. yet they, as it were, lull the soul to sleep, which condition is a continual obstacle against the Blessed Sacrament producing its full effects.

3. Or, they do not retain the bread.

As for bodily food, it is converted into the human substance. By this spiritual bread man is to be transformed so as to approach the sanctity of God. But if the stomach does not retain the food, it will give no nourishment. Likewise, if man is not willing to comply with his daily duties, nor to use any efforts towards avoiding his old sins, the Bread of Life cannot produce its effects thoroughly. Therefore, let us not be surprised that, such being the state of our soul, we make no progress in the spiritual life. The fault is with us, not with the bread. "He that loveth not, abideth in death." I John, iii, 14.

II. THE MOST DELICIOUS BREAD.

Its sweetness prefigured by the Manna. "Thou didst feed Thy people with the food of Angels, and gavest them bread from heaven prepared without labor, having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste." Wisd. xvi, 20. How great was the sweetness the Saints often experienced at the Lord's Supper! Why is it so different with you?

1. Because you are destitute

*a. Of a lively sense for celestial things.* You are cold and indifferent about higher objects. And because you are not anxious to make sacrifices for the honor of God, therefore God keeps His blessing from you also. And your condition will be like that of the Jews: "The people began to be weary of their journey and labor * * * our soul now loatheth this very light food." Numb. xxi, 4, 5.

*b. Of humility.* It is with an express purpose that the Church so often repeats: "O Lord, I am not worthy," etc. She intends to insinuate that without humility we are not worthy to partake of this Supper. The example of the Centurion at Capharnaum.

*c. Of ardent love.* Love is necessarily the indispensable condition of worthily partaking of this Banquet of Love.

2. Because you are not hungry.

He that is not hungry, finds no taste in the best food. You are satisfied

*a. With earthly food.* Therefore it is that your soul loatheth this celestial food. Whoever has at heart the farm, or the oxen, or the wife, to him the table of the Lord is not an object of joy, but of fear and trouble.

*b. With the food of sin.* "As long as the Israelites carried with them food from Egypt, the land of darkness, the Lord sent them no Manna. And those who longed for the meat-pots and onions of Egypt, regarded the Manna as a light food.

III. THE MOST STRENGTHENING BREAD.

It is, indeed, the miraculous bread of Elias, (III Kings xix,

6–8,) and to-day the Lord invites the feeble and the lame, that He may strengthen them. From this it follows:

1. That you should frequently eat this bread.

Its strengthening power depends, chiefly, on its frequent reception. Call to mind:

*a. Your wants.* You are not satisfied with taking just so much of bodily food as is sufficient to save you from starvation; in order to gain strength you must eat *frequently.* In like manner our spiritual feebleness and misery demand a frequent use of this Heavenly Bread. By her precept to confess at least once a year, the Church intended to protect her children against starvation, whilst by recommending a frequent Communion she expresses her desire of strengthening our spiritual life.

*b.* The necessity of practicing often what we must learn well. What you do but seldom, you will do imperfectly. Those who seldom receive Holy Communion are in great danger of receiving it unworthily.

2. That you should co-operate.

The best food does not compel the idler, but only enables him, to work. Make the application in regard to Holy Communion.

3. That you should reflect upon the base ingratitude you are guilty of in neglecting the frequent reception of this great means of grace, so conducive to your eternal salvation. Would a great benefactor run after a beggar to induce him to accept his alms? What beggar would be proud enough to refuse them? You are this beggar. "Then the master of the house was angry." Lk. xiv, 21.

*Peroration:* Exhortation on the text: "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." John vi, 54.

John Tauler.

## II.

## THE BLESSED SACRAMENT THE GREATEST MIRACLE.

"He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord. He hath given food to them that fear Him." Ps. ix, 4. By these words the Psalmist praised the Lord for the many miracles wrought for His people on their pilgrimage through the desert, and particularly for the Manna, the miraculous bread rained down from heaven. The grand festival day of Corpus Christi has been instituted by the Church, in order that we may praise and thank our God for the true bread which descended from heaven, the divine Manna, of which the Manna of the desert was a mere figure. By this heavenly food our Lord has made a remembrance of His wonderful works. Manhu! said in astonishment the children of Israel one to another. What is this? Manhu! What is this? we also exclaim, our eyes fixed upon this celestial bread. "Thou shalt see, and abound, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged," when with the angels of heaven thou shalt cast thine eyes upon the miraculous nature of this mysterious bread. It is particularly three miracles to which I invite your attention: the miracle

1. Of boundless charity.
2. Of boundless wisdom.
3. Of divine omnipotence.

### PART I.

In the Blessed Sacrament the desire and longing of the human soul for God meets the desire and love of God for the human soul.

I. Man stretches forth his heart toward God, as the child stretches forth his hands towards his mother.

1. This desire has been implanted in our hearts by God Himself, Who created our soul according to His image and likeness. By endowing her with understanding He rendered her so noble

a daughter of heaven, that earthly goods cannot fill her desires. It is, then, in search of God that the individuals as well as the nations are wandering over the surface of the earth.

2. As man consists of soul and *body*, he is naturally desirous of seeing God in a visible form, and of having sensible communion with Him. Therefore, the Lord appeared to Abraham in human shape, to Moses in a burning bush, to the children of Israel in a column of fire, etc., and entering into communion with them by commanding them to eat of the sacrifices offered up to His honor, whilst the Gentiles by this desire were led so far astray as to worship idols; and the sects of our days, by violent efforts of the sensual nature, by trembling and groaning, and exciting wild passions, endeavor to receive a palpable pledge of the coming of the Holy Ghost.

II. God has an infinite love and desire for the human soul:

1. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee." Jerem. xxxi, 3. "My delights are to be with the children of men." Prov. viii, 31. * * * For love of us He has created this visible world and its beauties; the bright stars, the blooming trees and flowers, the singing birds, the nourishing fruits of the earth are to preserve and gladden man's life * * * To place Himself under a certain obligation, as it were, to love us, He imprinted His own likeness upon our soul * * * The history of mankind is an illustration of the words: "My delights are to be with the children of men."

2. Love for us has induced the Son of God to descend from heaven and become man for us * * * Mankind has seen its God, and conversed with Him and loved Him, as one of its members.

3. Not only the desire and longing of mankind for God should be satisfied, but the desire of every individual soul, for which purpose the God Incarnate instituted the Blessed Sacrament, the greatest miracle of His divine love. Now you may approach Him to enjoy and possess your God. You re enabled to receive Him in your heart and to be intimately united with

Him, and to quench the burning thirst of your immortal soul. And the Lord God satisfies His own desire, entering the human soul to transform her into Himself. Thus in the Sacred Host God and man, heaven and earth, celebrate their union.

PART II.

"How great are Thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made all things in wisdom" (Ps. ciii, 24), said the Psalmist, when contemplating the workings of Divine Wisdom manifested in the visible world. Yet, bright as the light of wisdom may shine in the wonderful course of the stars, on the earth beneath our feet and its fruits and products. in the life of nations and individuals; brighter and more wonderful appear its manifestations in the Blessed Sacrament.

I. His infinite wisdom is manifested by the choice of the species of bread and wine. By choosing them rather than gold and precious stones, He rendered it possible to become our food, and thus to enter into our heart and transform us into Himself.

II. Bread and wine are easily procured and preserved.

III. The species of bread and wine remind us of the effects of the Holy Eucharist. Bread and wine restore the strength of man and gladden his heart. * * * The Sacred body of the Lord preserves and strengthens the supernatural life of our soul, and arms us against the snares of the enemy.

Let us not frustrate by lukewarmness the loving designs of Jesus Christ in the institution of this Blessed Sacrament; but let us frequently receive this bread that came down from heaven. Let us follow the Christians of the age of the martyrs, who in their struggles took daily refuge to Jesus by Holy Communion.

PART III.

Divine omnipotence is manifested by the many miracles wrought in this Blessed Sacrament.

I. The transubstantiation is the greatest miracle. "The perishable substance of bread is by the word of the priest changed into the glorious and imperishable body of Jesus Christ." St. Thomas of Villanova.

II. The species of bread and wine remain without having any inherent substance. By the power of the Almighty they hang, as it were, in the air.

III. Though the species are divided, the body of Christ remains undivided, being present in every fragment. In a similar manner you see your whole person in every fragment of a broken mirror.

IV. Though thousands and millions of Christians rejoice in receiving this celestial bread, it is never diminished.

V. Mors est malis, vita bonis. The reception of the same Sacrament produces either death or life.

VI. All these miracles are wrought by the word of mortal man, who is the first to worship in astonishment the miracles performed in his consecrated hands.

God could have created more and greater worlds, a greater Sacrament He could not create.

*Peroration:* Oh, that we had a vivid faith in this Blessed Sacrament! "God, who could create out of nothing all things that were not, is able to change things which are." St. Ambrose. We witness natural transubstantiations, v. g. the transformation of the food we eat into the substance of our body. We read of the rod of Moses changed into a serpent, of the waters of Egypt, into blood, of the water changed into wine, at Cana * * * The very idea of such a mystery is proof of its reality, as no human reason would have ever invented what is so far beyond its reach, nay by which it is completely overwhelmed and silenced. God has undoubtedly spoken, which is enough for a true Christian to give his assent. Let us adore, visit, and receive this Most Precious Treasure. "The infinite wisdom of God knows nothing better, the infinite power can give nothing greater, the infinite love of God can give nothing holier." St. Augustine.

Joseph Ehrler.

## Festival of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

### DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

"One of the soldiers opened His side with a spear: and immediately there came out blood and water." John xix, 34. For our times it was reserved to have the treasures of the divine heart of Jesus fully opened and revealed. Jesus chose an humble nun, the Blessed Margareth Mary, of the Salesian order at Paray in France—who died in the odor of Sanctity, A. D. 1690, and was pronounced Blessed by Pius IX, A. D. 1860—for His instrument to propagate the devotion to His Sacred Heart. It is now the most cherished devotion throughout the Church, and for the purpose of its promotion our Holy Father Pius IX has extended the celebration of a special feast in honor of the Sacred Heart over the whole Catholic world on the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi. To contribute my share towards promoting this beautiful devotion, I will explain to you, why and how we should pay a peculiar homage to the Sacred Heart of our Saviour.

#### PART I.

#### MOTIVES WHY WE SHOULD PAY A PECULIAR HOMAGE TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

I. *Because it is the human heart of our Saviour.*

1. As such it is the principal part of the sacred body of Jesus Christ, and the chief organ of His blessed soul. Our heart is the seat of our feelings of joy, sadness, love, etc. "A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good * * * For, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Lk. vi, 45. Therefore, all the deeds of our Saviour, His endurance of hardships, His going about under great fatigues and doing good, His compassion for the unhappy, His watching and praying at night, etc., proceeded from His Sacred Heart as their source. And for such a loving heart should we not entertain the tenderest affection?

2. Moreover, remember that eminently through His Sacred Heart Jesus has accomplished our redemption. His heart submitted to the will of the Heavenly Father, being obedient to the death of the cross. His heart was so agitated by anguish, that He sweat blood, and exclaimed on the Cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Mt. xxvii, 46. At last Jesus had His heart pierced through with a lance, in order to convince us that we owe to His heart both the beginning and the consummation of our redemption. If we entertain a peculiar veneration for the sacred instruments of His Passion, the lance, the nails, the crown of thorns, etc., how much more reason has the Church to exhort us to cherish a tender devotion to this Sacred Heart. O Sacred Heart of Jesus, if I only look on thee as a human heart, thou art above all human hearts dear to me; for thou art the source of all virtue and sanctity, and to thee I owe principally my being redeemed and being enabled to pray with confidence: Abba, my Father!

II. *Because it is a divine heart.* For, it is the heart of the God-man, and therefore united to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. We owe, then, to this heart the same adoration as to Jesus Christ, Whose heart it is. And our devotion should increase by reflecting, that the prayers and supplications, the anguish and blood, of this Heart, are of infinite value, because it is a divine heart, it is God's heart. How then could we refuse to this Divine Heart a peculiar devotion?

III. *Because this Sacred Heart is all love, all tenderness for us.* The heart is the organ and seat of love. As we have eyes, to see; ears, to hear; a tongue to speak; feet, to walk, so we have a heart, to love. Therefore the heart is the generally acknowledged symbol of love. St. Augustine and St. Theresa are represented as holding a heart in their hands. "My son, give Me thy heart," says God, demanding our love. Prov. xxiii, 26. For the same reason the First Commandment runs thus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God from thy *whole heart*." Considering the Sacred Heart of Jesus as a symbol of His charity, how many reasons have we to pay to it all possible homage?

1. The Son of God burned with love for us from all eternity, ardently longing to become man and to die for us. In the plentitude of time this furnace of infinite love was enclosed in the small space of a human heart, inducing the Son of God to become poor, that He might enrich us; to humble Himself, that He might exalt us; to die for us, that we might have life everlasting. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his *friends*." John xv, 13. It is the abyss of love to die for one's *enemies*, as Jesus did. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." Rom. v, 10.

2. "Charity," says the Apostle, "never faileth." I Cor. xiii, 8. The charity of Jesus never fails, never ceases; it burns in His Adorable Heart without interruption. Or, why is Jesus day and night, from year to year, present in the Most Blessed Sacrament, unless to give you the first proof of His love for you? Here He waits to hear your wants, here He has His hands full of presents; here He offers to the sinner forgiveness, etc.

IV. *Because we should atone for the many insults offered to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.* There are, alas, many who, instead of loving this most amiable Heart, offend it by inflicting the most painful wounds. But His charity towards us detains Him in the house of grace. And should we not be inflamed with anxious desire to console our own Jesus by our ardent love, and thus to atone for the outrages committed against this Sacrament of love? This atonement was the principal object Jesus Christ had in view, when He exhorted the Blessed Margareth Mary to promote the devotion to His heart. This He deigned to reveal in express terms to this holy virgin.

## PART II.

### IN WHICH WAY WE SHOULD PAY HOMAGE TO THIS SACRED HEART.

Our Divine Saviour said to His disciples: "Come to Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek

and humble of heart." Mt. xi, 28. Jesus desires to have us honor His heart, by putting our confidence in Him, and following His example, especially in meekness and humility.

I. We cannot put our entire confidence in men, because they either *cannot*, or *will not*, help us; whilst Jesus has the *power* and the *good will* to help us.

1. *Jesus can do all things.* Who would doubt the power of the Almighty? He stilled the winds and tempests. Was it not my Lord and God, Who with a few loaves fed several thousand men, who healed the sick and delivered those oppressed by the devil, who called the dead to life? And Jesus is still the same Son of God He was eighteen hundred years ago.

II. Much more our confidence must increase by reflecting that the Sacred Heart is all *love*, *bounty*, and *tenderness*. When did any one in distress ever come to Jesus without being relieved? The blind, the lame, the lepers, come to Him, and are healed. He cures before He is asked, as, for instance, the man who had labored under a dreadful malady for thirty-eight long years. When His disciples are anxious to procure for Him a short rest, He rebukes them, and He Himself is never too tired to listen to their petitions. And how compassionate is He with the poor sinners! Witness, Mary Magdalen in Simon's house. Verily, to seek the sinners and pardon them, is the ardent desire of this tenderest of hearts. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Lk. xix, 10.

III. Jesus admonishes us to imitate His Sacred Heart particularly in the practice of two virtues: humility and meekness of heart.

1. Jesus was *meek* before Herod, with His disciples, toward the Samaritans who locked their gates against Him; with His enemies, who wanted to stone Him. And how meek is Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, when His own children are so cold of heart, or even guilty of horrible sacrileges? * * Follow Him!

2. Jesus was *humble* of heart. Think of His manger, of the poverty of His youth and of His public life, of His baptism

in the midst of sinners, of His Sacred Passion. Barabbas, etc. Behold His humility in the Holy Eucharist, where He hides Himself, His majesty, under the appearances of bread and wine. Humble yourself.

*Peroration:* Endeavor to acquire a tender devotion to this Sacred Heart. Confide in it; it is the most powerful and the kindest Heart. Hope to obtain whatever is necessary in time and eternity. And, above all, strive to have your heart transformed into the Heart of Jesus, by being humble and meek of heart. And how could you, henceforth, still love sin and the world, which have inflicted such cruel wounds on this tenderest Heart? My heart for Jesus, my heart for Jesus.

John Ev. Zollner.

## Third Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.
### GOD'S MERCY TOWARDS THE SINNER.

For two classes of men to-day's Gospel is particularly deserving of serious reflection, for the poor sinners, and for those who have no mercy and compassion for their fallen brethren. Are not most men to be found in the one or the other of these two classes? Reflect, then, earnestly, all of you—the sinner, to guard against despair; the hard-hearted, against uncharitableness—on the inexhaustible store of the mercy of God, "Who is rich in mercy, through His exceeding charity with which He loved us, even when we were dead in sins." Eph. ii, 4, 5. For this purpose we will consider

I. The motives of the divine mercy;

II. The greatness thereof;

III. The manner in which it is manifested with regard to the sinner.

#### PART I.

#### THE MOTIVES OF THE DIVINE MERCY.

The reasons by which God is moved to boundless mercy, are not found outside of God. "God is induced by His own nature to show mercy to the sinner." St. Bernard. These motives are:

1. *The promotion of His own glory.*

Although as every work of God, so also the works of His justice bear testimony to His glory, and promote it eternally, still the Church prays with good reason: "Who makest known Thy power above all by mercy and sparing." For, to show mercy, is the most sublime work, and, emphatically, a divine action. *Corollaries: a. Never despair* of the boundless mercy of God; to doubt is to dishonor God. "If you dispute the infinite mercy, you dispute the very existence of God." St. Clement Alex. *b. Show mercy* also to others, that God's spirit be made manifest in you.

2. *His holiness.*

God, by His love of all that is good, and by His hatred of all that is bad, is moved to extirpate what is morally bad. This design is best accomplished by the conversion of the sinner, because if he would die a sinner, that which is bad would be and remain permanent in him. Hence His longanimity, His attempts at saving the sinner, His readiness to forgive, that sin may be abolished.

3. *The love of the Father for His Son.*

Jesus has purchased and redeemed mankind by His death. By losing one soul, He loses a most dear property, the price of His own precious blood. Therefore, the Father is moved by love for His Son to save the redeemed and to recover the lost soul. "This is the will of Him that sent Me, the Father: that all that He hath given Me, I lose not thereof." John vi, 39.

4. *His infinite benevolence.*

God is urged by His infinite benevolence to save His creature from everlasting ruin, and to let it partake of His own happiness. "Therefore, God is urged to show mercy, as the woman being in labor to bring forth." St. Chrysostom. What stirring motives for unbounded hope and mercy!

## PART II.

### THE IMMENSE GREATNESS OF DIVINE MERCY.

Like all the divine perfections it is

1. *As great as God Himself.*

"Thy mercy is great above heavens." Ps. cvii, 5. The All-powerful has no greater power than mercy, the All-wise has no greater wisdom than pity. How could the hope of the sinner ever surpass it?

2. *It extends to all sins.*

"Every sin, every guilt, is immersed in the ocean of divine mercy, without leaving any traces." St. Pacianus. Be not despondent on account of the great number of your bad deeds. "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow." Is. i, 18. Or, on account of their hideousness: "Where

sin abounded, grace hath abounded more." Rom. v, 20. Have not the saintly penitents obtained forgiveness of the most hideous crimes? "A murderer is the first stone God made use of in establishing His eternal kingdom." St. Augustine.

3. *It embraces all sinners without exception.*

God shows mercy and bestows His benefits and graces not only upon those whose conversion He foresees, but also upon those who will die in final impenitence. Examples are Pharao and Judas. "Is it not a boundless mercy that opens such great treasures, notwithstanding the certain knowledge of their being spent in vain?" St. Chrysostom. How much more is it our duty to show mercy to those who fell, since we do not know their lot in eternity, and must pray for their salvation?

4. *It lasts till death.*

It lasts as long as conversion is possible, consequently to the confines of eternity, where it is replaced by the divine justice.

PART III.

THE WONDERFUL MANNER OF ITS MANIFESTATION.

1. *Before the sinner is converted.*

Before the conversion of the sinner God shows His mercy in the shape of an invincible, self-denying, love toward him who is only deserving of hatred. This love is manifested:

*a.* By graciously sparing him who, a criminal as he is, has forfeited every right to temporal and eternal life. Justice demands that the sinner should be immediately cast into hell; yet, "I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of affliction." Jerem. xxix, 11. When all nature is armed against the sinner (Wisd. v, 21, ff.), God restrains it, as David restrained the persecutors of Absalom: "Save me the boy Absalom." II Kings xviii, 12.

*b.* By incessantly seeking, inviting, urging, with such tender solicitude, as if the shepherd had forgotten all his faithful sheep. "Wherever I might run, from cliff to cliff, Thy faithful mercy incessantly followed me there on wings." St. Augustine. (God's unceasing attempts in seeking a lost sheep, is vividly described in the parable of the Good Shepherd).

*c.* By ardently longing for him. "How long shall I see men fleeing away?" Jerem. iv, 21. Not unlike the mother of Tobias, He looks round about from the Cross. Tob. x. O sinner, say thou also: "My Father numbereth the days: and if I stay one day more, his soul will be afflicted." Tob. ix, 4.

2. *Whilst the sinner is converted.*

God manifests His love towards the sinner, whilst he is being converted,

*a.* By receiving him kindly and meeting him graciously.

*b.* By forgiving and forgetting all offences.

*c.* By rejoicing exceedingly at finding again him who was lost. The parable of the Prodigal Son. The parable of today's Gospel. Lk. xv, 6.

3. *After the sinner is converted.*

After the conversion of the sinner, God shows His incomprehensible kindness to the impoverished soul

*a.* By granting her efficacious graces, so that, what God promised to the lamenting Prophet with regard to Jerusalem, is done for the soul: "There shall be heard again in this place, which you say is desolate * * * the voice of joy and the voice of gladness * * * for the Lord is good." Jerem. xxxiii, 10, ff.

*b.* By recalling to life the merits which in consequence of mortal sin had died away. "They shall be as they were when I had cast them off." Zach. x, 6.

*c.* By admitting them to a participation in the greatest treasures and means of salvation, as they are deposited in the Catholic Church.

*d.* By receiving them into His everlasting joy and happiness in Heaven.

*Peroration:* Who could, without having his heart moved within him, contemplate the great mercy of our God? Now, then, O sinner, embrace this divine mercy, before it shall be replaced by eternal justice. And you all, imitate the mercy of God, that you may obtain mercy here and hereafter.

Querico Rossi.

## II.

## HOMILY ON THE PARABLE OF THE LOST GROAT.

In the parable of the lost groat we admire the treasure of divine wisdom and charity, manifested in presence of those who reproached Jesus for His forbearance with sinners. Two objects attract our special attention: The lost groat, and the seeking woman.

### PART I.

### THE LOST GROAT.

1. *It is a symbol of the human soul.*

*a.* She seems to be of *little value*, if considered in her imperfections, in her inability to perform supernatural acts, and even more so, if compared to the Holy Angels, who are purer than gold, brighter than diamonds.

*b.* Nevertheless, the groat as a coin has its value. So is the human soul of great value, because she is created according to the image and likeness of God, redeemed by His precious blood, sealed by the Holy Spirit. Eph. i, 13; iii, 30. Thus she is raised to a supernatural state and enabled to merit the glory and bliss of heaven.

2. *How the groat, the human soul, is lost.*

*a.* By the deceitfulness of the devil, who, driven by envy and hatred, endeavors to deprive the Divine Master of His coin, and the coin of its splendor. He buries the soul in the mire of sin.

*b.* Through the fault of man. Whilst he is unmindful of being God's own property, undervalues the worth of his soul, keeps company with thieves, his soul is lost.

3. *The consequences are most deplorable.*

*a.* The lost soul is covered with the filth of sin, from which she can never cleanse herself by her own power. "My iniquities are gone over my head; and as a heavy burden are become heavy upon me." Ps. xxxvii, 5.

*b.* The value of the soul diminishes. The merits of the

past are lost, the power of ignorance and concupiscence increases.

*c.* The coinage disappears. Sin deforms the divine image and likeness; at its entrance grace leaves the soul; and man becomes the object of divine scorn and hatred, worthy of being cast into the fire.

But our Lord is anxious to have the lost soul restored to her former beauty.

PART II.

THE SEEKING WOMAN.

1. *Who is this woman?*

*a.* The *Church* of the Lord—Catholic, Apostolic: Christ's immaculate bride, "the woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." Apoc. xii, 1.

*b.* She *alone* is this woman: for she alone received the divine commission to seek what is lost; she alone brings to light the lost groat, whilst sham churches bury it in the mire of heresy and suffer it to perish in darkness.

2. *What does the lighted candle signify?*

Christ, "the light of the world." John viii, 12, viz.:

*a.* *The light of revelation*, by which we know our origin, destiny, and the way leading to it.

*b.* *The light of grace*, by which our heart is enlightened and warmed, the shadows of doubt and spiritual desolation are dispersed, and the sacred flames of true charity and supernatural joy are enkindled.

3. *The woman seeks diligently:*

*a.* *Truly and literally* through her ministers, who for this reason are called "the light of the world." Mt. v, 14. They preach the true faith untainted by the spirit of the times, and dispense the means of divine grace. The Church carries this light through the whole house—the world; into every heart.

*b.* *Figuratively*—By the use of blessed candles and by the lamp of the sanctuary. By the lighted candles at the baptismal font, at the Holy Sacrifice, before the Blessed Sacrament, beside

the death-bed, she reminds her children of the light of faith and charity on earth, and of the eternal light, which she desires may shine upon them.

4. *Who are the friends and neighbors rejoicing with her?*

They are the Angels and Saints. "There shall be joy before the Angels of God." A noble neighborhood, indeed! Is it not honorable to have such a woman for your mother? And should you not, after you have grieved the Angels so many times, be anxious to fill with joy the friends of your mother. Oh, wait no longer!

5. What will she do to the soul, when found? She cleanses her from the mire and filth of sin in the holy Sacrament of Penance. She renews the image and likeness of God by imparting once more Sanctifying Grace. She finally places her into the hands of her divine Master, where she will shine for all eternity.

May this happiness be our portion forever!

W. Reischl.

## Feast of SS. Peter and Paul.

### ST. PETER THE ROCK AND KEY-HOLDER OF THE CHURCH.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail againts it." Mt. xvi, 18. The feast of St. Peter and St. Paul is celebrated the *same* day, because both suffered martyrdom on the same day, the 29th of June, under the bloody reign of Nero, Paul being beheaded, Peter crucified with his head downward at his own request. On the scenes of their glorious victory two magnificent churches point heavenward: the world-renowned Basilica of St. Peter and the majestic church of St. Paul 'without the walls.' Their remains are preserved in a chapel beneath the high-altar of St. Peter's, where one hundred and twelve silver lamps are kept burning day and night in honor of these Princes of the Apostles. As, however, the present feast is principally dedicated to the honor of St. Peter, and the virtues and glory of St. Paul are specially commemorated to-morrow, let us look at St. Peter to-day, and make him as the rock and key-holder of the Church the subject of our instruction.

#### PART I.

#### OUR DIVINE SAVIOUR HAS BUILT HIS CHURCH UPON PETER, THE ROCK.

1. This is the doctrine of *Holy Scripture.* When Jesus Christ selected him to be one of His Apostles, He changed his name, Simon, into Cephas or Peter, which means Rock. "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas: which is interpreted, Peter." John i, 42 Of course this change of the name had its significance. This significance was made known to Peter, when Jesus asked His disciples: "Whom do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answering, said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter avows by this solemn declaration that Jesus Christ is the Promised Redeemer, and the true Son of God.

To reward him for this public confession, the Saviour says: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood has not revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in heaven." Having thus called him blessed on account of the true faith received from the Heavenly Father, Jesus utters the important words: "And I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Such is the reward: The Son of God builds His Church upon the Son of Jona as its visible foundation-stone. What the rock is to the castle built upon it, that Peter is to the Church built upon him. Therefore, whatever is not built upon this rock, can it be part of the Church? No more than a brick, lying in the yard, is part of your house. And from this one foundation-stone the Church derives its unity, on account of which "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

2. From this it evidently follows that the perpetual duration of the Church depends on the duration of the rock upon which it was built, that is, upon the *duration of the Papacy.* With the destruction of the Papacy the fate of the Church would be that of an edifice deprived of its foundation. Like the sects cut off from her, she would lose her true faith, and fall from error into error. The enemies of the Catholic Church being convinced of this truth, turned at all times their arms principally against the Apostolic See. In the first persecutions, during three centuries, out of thirty popes nearly all died martyrs of the faith, the first being Peter, who was crucified in the year 67, the last, St. Marcellus, who obtained the palm of martyrdom in the year 310.

In the succeeding ages the Papacy was continually attacked, especially by the heretics, in the most ferocious manner by the heretics of the sixteenth century, who in their fury went so far as to denounce the Pope as though he were anti-Christ, which belief, smacking more of madness than malignity, is still kept alive among many of our contemporaries. The heretics were often joined in their warfare by emperors, kings and whole nations. You have heard and read of the machinations of the French Revolution against the Papacy. Pope Pius VI was imprisoned in the

citadel of Valence near the French boundary. He died of poison, August 29th, 1799. Still the joy over the supposed downfall of the Papacy was premature. Pius VII succeeded Pius VI, A. D. 1800. We ourselves, have we not, for the last thirty years, been witnesses of the fury raging against this Apostolic See? But the Papacy exists at the present time, as it did 1800 years ago, whilst the works of men, the strongest human institutions, have gone to ruin and long ago disappeared from the face of the earth.

PART II.

PETER THE KEY-HOLDER OF THE CHURCH.

You know that the pictures of St. Peter always represent him as holding two keys in his right hand. The same is seen in the Papal arms. These keys remind us of the words addressed to Peter in to-day's Gospel: "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Mt. xvi, 19. The keys signify here the highest power in the Church. Such is the use and meaning of these words in Holy Scripture. Of Christ the prophet foretold: "I will lay the key of the house of David upon His shoulder; and He shall open, and none shall shut; and He shall shut, and none shall open." Is. xxii, 22. That is to say, God will confer on Him the supreme power. He is represented as having the keys of death and of hell, Apoc. i, 18, by which His absolute dominion over death and hell is evidently expressed. Delivering the keys of the fortress to the foe, is acknowledging him as its master. Consequently, by giving to Peter the keys of the Church, Jesus Christ gave to him the supreme power in His Church.

This is corroborated by the following words: "And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." *Binding* signifies, in the language of Scripture, commanding or punishing; *loosing* means, delivering from a duty, from guilt or punishment. Either, therefore, is expressive of the highest ruling power. Now, the highest ruling power in the Church embraces the offices of Teacher, Priest, and Pastor.

1. Peter and his successors are the *First Teachers* in the

Church. They must guard the purity of faith. They have the right and the duty of condemning new errors or heresies, to stigmatize in their true character books destructive of faith and morals. They have the power to convoke œcumenical councils, to preside at their sessions, and to confirm their decisions, which would not bind in conscience without the signature of him who occupies the chair of St. Peter. From the beginning the Popes have exercised this power: Clement, the fourth successor of St. Peter, in regard to the Church of Corinth; Victor, in the second century, in regard to Theodot of Byzantium, Ebion and Artemon; Cornelius, of the third century in regard to Novatus and Novatianus. And thus through all the eighteen centuries since the foundation of the Church. And in all cases the children of the Church have observed the word of St. Augustine: Roma locuta, causa finita.

2. The Pope, moreover, holds in the highest degree the powers of the Priesthood, comprising the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, the administration of the Holy Sacraments, and all other means conducive to the salvation of souls. Though all the bishops possess the plenitude of sacerdotal power, its exercise is lawful only under the supervision of the Pope, being thus subject to certain restrictions necessary for the maintenance of the unity and well-being of the Church. Thus, bishops cannot change the ceremonies of Mass, nor in the administration of the Sacraments; they must submit to regulations concerning the confessional, etc. The Pope has power to introduce or abrogate feast and fast-days. He has the most extensive power in regard to indulgences, whilst that of the other bishops is very limited. He has the exclusive right of the canonization of Saints.

3. The Pope is the *Supreme Pastor* of the Church. To him the words are addressed: "Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep." John xxi, 15, 17. Therefore, all the faithful, priests and bishops, are bound in conscience to obey the Pope, whenever he gives regulations concerning the government of the Church. As Supreme Pastor the Pope has the power of spiritual correction,

which is mostly exercised by excommunication, interdict, and suspension.

*Peroration:* Our Holy Father is, what Peter was, the head of the Catholic Church, the vicar of Jesus Christ on earth. If the words: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me," apply to every priest, how much more do they apply to the Pope, who in dignity far excels priests and bishops? Consider it an honor when people number you amongst the Ultramontanes. Ultramontane is he who looks beyond the mountains for the Vicar of Jesus Christ, through whom the Church is one and perpetual.

John Ev. Zollner.

## Fourth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### DANGERS CONNECTED WITH RICHES.

"Jesus said to His disciples: How hardly shall they who have riches, enter into the kingdom of God!" Mk. x, 23. The world and the Gospel hold quite different views concerning riches. Gold and silver are objects of the most ardent desire, the Paradise Lost, to so many. Our Saviour, on the contrary, speaks contemptuously about riches, as is seen from His conversation with the youth who was desirous of gaining life everlasting. When this youth had heard the counsel to sell whatsoever he had, and give to the poor, he went away sorrowful. "And Jesus looking around about, said to His disciples: How hardly shall they who have riches, enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answering again saith to them: Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Mk. x, 23. The Son of God goes so far as to say: "Woe to you that are rich: for you have your consolation. Woe to you that are filled; for you shall hunger." Lk. vi, 24; Cf. Lk. xvi, 9; Mt. xiii, 22; James v, 1-3. What shall we say now? Will all that are rich be excluded from the kingdom of heaven? Such is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ. He excludes from heaven only those rich men, who, on account of their riches, forget and neglect their eternal destiny. But, speaking in general, it cannot be denied that in riches there is great danger for our eternal salvation, because the rich man is very prone to forget and lose sight of his heavenly calling.

1. The rich man has often no fervent desire for heaven. We should keep our spiritual eyes continually raised up to heaven. "Behold, as the eyes of servants are on the hands of

their masters, as the eyes of the hand-maid are on the hands of her mistress: so are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us." Ps. cxxii, 2. "Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also." Mt. vi, 21. The seaman directs his course towards the harbor of his destination, keeping his thoughts concentrated upon this one object. The harbor of our destiny is heaven. "Thy kingdom come!" This beautiful petition should be incessantly on our lips. Experience teaches that the rich are generally unmindful of their eternal destiny, their heart being attached to the world. Thus, on our voyage on the ocean of life, riches are often not unlike to cliffs and sand-banks, that arrest or endanger the progress of the mariner.

2. He whose heart is attached to the riches of this world, will be overwhelmed with earthly cares, so that all earnest efforts for the salvation of his soul are well nigh impossible. "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." Mt. vi, 24. Moreover, the rich man not knowing so many cares and afflictions of life by which the poor are forced to look up to God as their only helper, is much inclined to trust in his wealth rather than in God, despises religion and its consolations.

3. Does not the history of both nations and individuals bear testimony to the great danger of wealth? As long as the children of Israel endured the hardships of an Egyptian captivity, and walked on the arduous path of their education in the desert, as long as they were persecuted by their enemies, they recognized the God of their fathers as their only helper and protector. But when they had reached the summit of their glory, they adored strange gods, so that the prophet in the sadness of his heart exclaimed: "Their land is filled with silver and gold; and there is no end of their treasures. And their land is filled with horses, and their chariots are innumerable. Their land also is full of idols; they have adored the work of their own hands, which their own fingers have made. And man hath bowed himself down, and man hath been debased." Isa.

ii, 7-9. "I am become rich," says Ephraim, "I have found me an idol." Osee xii, 8.

As to individuals, how great is the number of those who have said with Dives: "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and will build greater; and into them will I gather all things that are grown to me, and my goods. And I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest, eat, drink, make good cheer." Lk. xii, 18. How many have followed the prodigal son, who, trusting in the portion of substance falling to him, left and forgot his father's house!

4. On the other hand, who were those that followed our Saviour, to hear the good tidings from His divine lips! The poor and suffering, as the prophet had foretold; whilst the rich, to whom the solicitude for earthly things left no time to hear the voice of their king, refused to appear at the divine banquet. "The first said to Him: I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out to see it. I pray Thee, have me excused. And another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them; I pray Thee have me excused. And another said: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Lk. xiv, 18. Who are those that hunger and thirst after justice? Who are those that crowd our churches and surround our altars? Who else but those who have received at the hands of their Heavenly Father poverty for their inheritance? It is true, there are some few who, though surrounded by the splendor and riches of life, are a pattern to the poor by their poverty in spirit and by all other virtues. They are our pride, our crown and glory. Yet they are but exceptions to the rule.

5. Or, if you turn your eyes to the army of infidels, who are those that deny the immortality of the soul and regard Christianity as a folly? If you find amongst them some few who do not live in abundance, you may rest assured that they have been seduced and poisoned by the rich, with whom corruption originates. "I am become rich, I have found me an idol." The secret societies, in whose hands wealth is stored up have cor-

rupted some of the laboring classes, by holding out to them the promise of prosperity at the expense of their fellow-men, for the outspoken purpose of undermining and destroying the hated Christian religion.

*Peroration:* It would have been better for millions of our fellow-men, if instead of wealth they had inherited poverty from their parents. Be content with your allotment. Do not consider yourself strong enough to escape the many dangers of riches. Our Saviour has commanded all of us to pray: "And lead us not into temptation." It is far better not to know a danger, than to be compelled to resist it. Christians who amid earthly wealth are not forgetful of God and heaven, and as pious Esther cry up to heaven, "Thou knowest that thy handmaid hath never rejoiced, since I was brought hither unto this day, but in Thee, O Lord, God of Abraham," are rare indeed. The far greater number of men became wicked in consequence of coming into the possession of earthly goods. Let us remember the petition of King Solomon, who did not ask for riches, but for an understanding heart to discern between good and evil. Be mindful of the words of St. John the Evangelist: "Love not the world, nor those things which are in the world. The world passeth away, and the concupiscences thereof. But he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever." I John ii, 15, 17.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## NO SALVATION OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH.

It was out of the ship of Peter that Jesus taught the multitudes, as if to indicate His intention of founding an establishment in which the truth should be preached unimpaired, and the means of salvation faithfully administered, to the end of time. Now, as Jesus taught only out of one ship, so there can be no more than one source of truth and salvation, the Catholic Church founded by Him, of which we, therefore, proclaim that there is no salvation outside of her pale: a doctrine most odious in the

opinion of those who differ from us in faith, yet undoubtedly taught by Divine Revelation.

PART I.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS THE ONLY SAVING CHURCH.

I. As there is but one God and Father of all men, so there is but one Saviour, Who is "the way, the truth, and the life." John xiv, 6. "Nor is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." Act. iv, 12.

II. From this it follows that all men, in order to be saved, must believe in Him and do His holy will.

1. Those who believe and follow Him, will be saved. "This is life everlasting, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent." John xvii, 3. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii, 12.

2. Those who do the contrary, will not be saved. "He that doth not believe, is already judged: because he believeth not in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." John iii, 18. "He that beliveth not, shall be condemned." Mk. xvi, 16.

III. This faith, without which there is no salvation, is taught only by the true Church of Christ.

1. In her we find the word of Jesus Christ, which is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." Rom. i, 16. It is preached in obedience to the command of Jesus Christ: "Go ye, and teach all nations * * * * teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Mt. xxviii, 19. "He that heareth you, heareth Me." Lk. x, 16.

2. In her we find the grace of Jesus Christ, and remission of sins, by the Holy Sacraments. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Mt. xxviii, 19. "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." John xx, 23.

IV. Now, which amongst the many Christian communities is the true Church of Christ? Or, is it immaterial to which you belong? By no means.

1. Jesus Christ, the only Saviour and Mediator, has founded no more than one Church.

2. This only Church is the Catholic Church, as she is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic, which marks of truth you find in no other Christian community.

V. Consequently, the Catholic Church is the only saving Church. This doctrine involves neither intolerance nor cruelty; for, if our Church would not vindicate for herself the exclusive right and power to lead men on the path to heaven, she would be guilty:

1. Of placing error on an equal footing with truth, which must never be, since truth is necessarily intolerant in regard to error. For Jesus says plainly: "He that beliveth not, shall be condemned." "Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Mt. xv, 13.

2. Of surrendering her authority, or rather her very existence, since she could no longer claim obedience to her precepts and teachings.

VI. This has also been the doctrine of the Synods and Holy Fathers. See the beginning of the Athanasian Creed. The Holy Fathers say with St. Cyprian, that "He who has not the Church for his mother cannot have God for his Father," and that, "as all who were not in the ark of Noe perished in the waters of the deluge, so shall all perish who are out of the true Church," or with St. Augustine, that "no one can obtain salvation or life everlasting who has not Christ for his head. But no one can have Christ for his head who does not belong to His body, which is His Church."

VII. This is not the exclusive doctrine of the Catholic Church, but she holds it in common with all Christian denominations. Only the infidels scoff at it.

## PART II.

### NEVERTHELESS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CONDEMNS NOT THOSE WHO DO NOT BELONG TO HER COMMUNION.

I. It is not the Church, but God, her founder, Who holds the keys of heaven and hell. He alone can save and condemn.

II. The Catholic Church declares *by what means* you will

be saved, which is certainly far from declaring *who* will be saved. This is reserved to God alone, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." I Tim. ii,4.

III. No one will perish without his own fault. Now, there are two classes of men outside of the Church:

1. Some are outside of the Church through their own fault. These are condemned, not by the Church, but by God Himself, Who says: "He that believeth not, shall be condemned." Mk. xvi, 16. "Such a one (an heretic) is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment." Tit. iii, 11.

2. Others are in error without their own fault. God will not condemn them, if they sincerely search after truth and do what they believe to be right. The Catholic Church counts them amongst her children. "God is no respector of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh justice, is acceptable to Him." Act x, 34.

IV. The error, not the erring, is condemned by the Church. In which of her Creeds did she ever teach her children to despise the erring? On the contrary, she teaches and practices charity towards all.

Resuming the above exposition, we say: (1) The religion that points out the right path to heaven, and is in possession of the means of obtaining heaven, is undoubtedly a saving religion. (2) A religion that points out false paths and means, is not and cannot be saving. (3) Only one religion can be the true religion, which, consequently is the only saving religion. (4) He that is addicted to a religious error, cannot be saved through this error, but in spite of his error through a sincere desire for truth, consequently through the Catholic Church, to which he belongs spiritually.

*Peroration:* In the ship of Peter—the Catholic Church—we possess the true faith, and the sacraments, and the promise of the eternal crown. Let us live in accordance with this faith, and make frequent use of the means of grace. "Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Apoc. iii, 11.

From the Periodical "Philothea."

## Fifth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### FORGIVE.

"If thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and first go to be reconciled to thy brother; and then come and offer thy gift." Mt. v, 23, 24. Would to God that all men might heed these words of our Saviour! But, alas! there are many, even amongst Catholics, who perhaps for years have been fostering an implacable hatred against those who trespassed against them. They are not willing to forgive, because they deem it impossible, or unnecessary, or undignified to forgive. It is to them that I say to-day: Forgive!

PART I.

FORGIVENESS IS POSSIBLE.

To deem it impossible to forgive your offender, is

I. A fatal *self-delusion.*

There have always been men who have considered revenge a base passion, and have readily forgiven the greatest offences. Such men have been

1. Amongst the *Gentiles.* Phocion, a prominent citizen in Greece, had been sentenced by his fellow-citizens to drink the cup of poison. Before tasting it, he said to his son: "This is my last will, O son, that thou mayest soon forget this cup of poison, and never take revenge for it."

2. Amongst the *Jews.* Joseph forgave his brothers, David his mortal enemy, Saul, etc.

3. Amongst the *Christians.* "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," was the prayer of Stephen for those who stoned him.

"Verily, I forgive thee, and thou shalt be my brother in place of him whom thou hast killed," said the Christian knight, John Gualbert, to the murderer of his brother, who, unarmed as he was, begged for his life in the name of the Crucified. If to them it was possible to forgive, why should it not be possible to you?

II. *A blasphemy.*

God requires of you to forgive your offender, and has a right to do so,

1. As our *Lord.* We have a commandment to forgive, founded on the law of nature, on the writen law, and on the law of grace. "If you love those that love you, what reward shall you have?" Mt. v, 46. And is God's authority not enough for us? God wills it. "Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you." Mt. v, 44. Now, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Rom. iv, 20.

2. As our *Father* and *Benefactor.* If man does not deserve forgiveness, God deserves it in the stead of him. "What shall I render to the Lord, for all the things that He hath rendered to me?" Ps. cxv, 12. Forgive! This is the best proof of your gratitude and love.

3. As our *model.* How many outrages committed against Him does He forgive sinful men! His example is a commandment for us. "Be you perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect." Mt. v, 48.

4. As our *judge.* "Forgive, and you shall be forgiven." Lk. vi, 37.

Now when God requires you to forgive, is it not blasphemous to assert what He requires of you to be impossible?

PART II.

FORGIVENESS IS NECESSARY.

I. *Reason teaches it.*

1. *Noble and generous* is the conduct of him who is ready for reconciliation. He manifests strength of mind and magnanimity of soul by forgiving the offense inflicted. "He overcomes evil by good." Rom. xii, 21. And is it not the duty for everyone to be noble and generous?

2. How dreadful are the *consequences of implacability!* Man is easily offended. If men were not ready to forgive, where would you find peace and happiness? Would our life upon earth and the society of our fellow-men not be a continual source of unhappiness and misery?

II. *Revelation requires it.*

1. In the *Old Testament* God said: "Seek not revenge, nor be mindful of the injury of thy citizens." Lev, xix, 18. "Remember the covenant of the most High, and overlook the ignorance of thy neighbor." Ecclus. xxviii, 9.

2. *Jesus Christ* teaches forgiveness *a.* by His *words:* "Forgive, and you shall be forgiven." Lk. vi, 37. "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you." Lk. vi, 27. The wicked servant, who throttled his fellow-servant because of his inability to pay his debt, was delivered to the torturers. "So also shall My heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts." Mt. xviii, 5. *b.* By his *example.* Dying He prayed for those who crucified Him: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Lk. xxiii, 24. *c.* By teaching us how to *pray.* "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Mt. vi, 12.

3. The *disciples* of Jesus teach the same. "Revenge not yourselves, my dearly beloved, but give place to wrath (of God); for it is written: Revenge is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Rom. xii, 19. "Put on the bowels of mercy * * * bearing with one another, if you have a complaint against another: even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do you also." Col. iii, 13. "Let not the sun go down upon your anger." Eph. iv, 26.

## PART III.

### FORGIVENESS IS LAUDABLE AND MERITORIOUS.

I. By forgiving the offenses committed against you, you gain

1. The *favor of men.* Only ruffians become more arrogant in consequence of your proneness to forgive; with the rest of men it produces the contrary effects. "If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat: if he thirst, give him drink: for doing this, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." Rom. xii, 20. "That is, thou shalt cause in him the pain of confusion, and thus change his mind." St. Augustine.

2. The *complacency of God.* "Forgive thy neighbor if he

hath hurt thee: and then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest." Ecclus. xxviii, 2. "If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offenses." Mt. vi, 14.

II. He who is not willing to forgive, sins:

1. Against God the *Father*, by trespassing one of His commandments: "Judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy." James ii, 13.

2. Against God the *Son*. He denies Him, because he denies the characteristic feature and virtue of Christianity. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another." John xiii, 35.

3. Against the *Holy Ghost*, Who is the spirit of love, as He appeared especially in the form of fiery tongues.

4. Against His *fellow-man*, who holds the place of God. God has transferred His claims on us to him, so that the words of St. Paul may be applied to God: "If therefore, thou count me a partner, receive him (Onesimus) as myself: and if he hath wronged thee in any thing, or is in thy debt, put it to my account." Philemon 17–19.

5. Against *himself*. He pronounces the sentence of condemnation upon his own head whenever he prays: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." God will answer to his prayer: "Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant." Lk. xix, 22.

*Peroration:* Grant us, then, O Lord, a heart always ready for reconciliation, that in us Thy word may be fulfilled: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." Mt. v, 9. Bourdaloue.

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## II.

## ON CURSING.

All men being children of one Father, Who is in heaven, are brothers and sisters to one another. Accordingly, they should entertain a tender love and the best wishes for one another. It is, however, a lamentable fact, that Christians revile,

abuse, and even curse, their fellow-men, and all this with the greatest indifference, as though it were no sin. But our Divine Saviour says in to-day's Gospel: "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be guilty of the council," etc. Mt. v, 22. Let me then call your attention to the sinfulness of cursing, a vice so frequent amongst us.

Though thousands of men do not heed the malice of cursing, it is nevertheless

I. *A great sin.*

1. Cursing is abominable:

In itself. Whoever curses, makes use of words which should not be mentioned amongst Christians; he speaks the language of the reprobate. "You are of your father, the devil; and the desires of your father you will do." John viii, 44.

By reason of the motive inducing you to curse, which is to wish evil to yourself or others.

2. Cursing is malicious.

*a.* Every man who curses, acts maliciously, since he usurps God's right to judge men. "He that judgeth me, is the Lord. Therefore judge not before the time." I. Cor. iv, 4, 5. "You usurp the place of a judge, and wish that God should be the hangman and beadle." St. Augustine. Moreover, he sins against charity. If you violate the precept of charity by rejoicing over your neighbor's misfortune; how much more do you offend him by wishing that misfortune might befall him! The sin increases in proportion to the dignity of the person who is cursed. "Cursing is in itself a great sin, and so much greater, the more we should love and honor the person we curse." St. Thomas Aqu.

*b.* Greater is the malice of a *Catholic* Christian who curses. How great must be the outrage, when he whom God has made His familiar friend, speaks the language of the damned! He whom God nurses at the bosom of His Church, whom He nourishes with the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ at the banquet of the Angels, who belongs to the people of whom it is written: "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people." I Pet. ii, 9.

3. Cursing is a *scandal*. There is scarcely a more scandalous sin. Impure conversation is a poison. But impure lips usually shun the light, being opened only among persons of the same mind, whence the pestilence created by them is not so generally spread. But who does not witness the daily spreading of the pestilence of cursing? "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness * * * Destruction and unhappiness in their ways." Ps. xiii, But, "woe to the world on account of scandals." Mt. xviii, 7.

4. Cursing is a *folly*. By cursing you hurt yourself with regard to your temporal welfare, and you ruin your own soul, without profit or pleasure; which is not so much the case with other sins.

5. Cursing is *detrimental*.

*a*. To the *curser*. While on earth he carries about in his soul a worm that gnaws at his rest and peace. He deprives himself of God's blessing, without which he cannot be happy. He forfeits his eternal happiness: "Be not deceived: the railers shall not possess the kingdom of God." I Cor. vi, 9. "He loved cursing, and it shall come unto him." Ps. cviii, 18.

*b*. To *others*. Not to mention the harm done to those whose souls are contaminated by the poison flowing from cursing lips, sometimes whole communities are punished for the outrage committed by a few; and sometimes God permits the evil to come over him who was cursed, especially over children cursed by their cruel parents. Who should wonder at the fact that emperors and kings, for instance, Justinian the Emperor, St. Louis, king of France, punished severely their subjects for the vice of cursing?

II. By the common excuses the malice of the sin is not diminished.

It is truly ridiculous to excuse cursing by such flippant arguments as the following:

1. I cannot help cursing: domestic trouble, unruly children, are the cause.

They are not the cause, though they may be the occasion, of it. You should resist the temptation. Your impatience, which

cannot bear the least; your self-will, pretending to be right everywhere; your wrath, that desires vengence;—these are the causes of your cursing.

2. My cursing is not sinful, because I do not mean what I say. I only intend to render my subjects more attentive.

It is seldom that cursing is not meant in earnest. And if so, who gives you the right to use such scandalous expressions? Besides, you gain no credit by cursing, on the contrary you lose it.

3. I curse by inadvertency and habit.

If you curse from inadvertency, you betray a pernicious indifference about offending God and injuring your neighbor. And if you curse by habit, you ought to know that the habit, far from lessening, increases the sin.

4. I curse only when I am in a passion.

Does anger lessen or rather increase sin? Is it not your duty to overcome your passion? By contrition you will obtain forgiveness of your sin; but you will not annul its consequences regarding your fellow-men. And if your contrition be sincere, you will abstain from cursing for the future.

*Peroration:* What must you do in order to throw off the bad habit of cursing? It is very difficult. "If the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots; you also may do well, when you have learned evil." Yet it is not impossible, if you will but apply the following means: Reflect often, how abominable, malicious, foolish, and scandalous it is to curse.

Reflect on the severe account you will have to give at the judgment. If you will have to answer for every idle word, what will be your lot, if your mouth overflows with curses?

Watch your own conversation, and punish yourself whenever you have been so unhappy as to curse.

Have recourse to prayer, and beseech God every day for His assistance in governing your tongue.

Follow the advice of your confessor.

"Bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not." Rom. xii, 14.

Wiser.

## Sixth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST, ALTHOUGH A ROYAL BANQUET, AN OBJECT OF LOATHING TO MANY.

As Jesus gave earthly bread to the multitude in the desert, so He gives in our days heavenly Bread to all who are willing to partake of His supper. But unlike the people in the desert, who, having been with Jesus three days without anything to eat, accepted with eagerness the bread prepared for them, many Christians seldom, and only with reluctance, partake of this Bread from Heaven. How is it, then, that, though the Holy Eucharist is a truly royal banquet, so many turn with loathing from this Bread of the Angels?

PART I.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST IS A ROYAL BANQUET.

1. *The Host a King.*

At the Holy Eucharist Jesus is the host, since He prepares the table and tenders His invitation to all. "My flesh is meat indeed." John vi, 56. "Come to Me, all you that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you

*a.* Jesus Christ is a King of Infinite Majesty. His throne is in the highest heaven. "The Lord Jesus * * * sitteth at the right hand of God." Mk. xvi, 19. * * Before His name every creature bows. "God hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name: so that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." Philp. ii, 9. His servants are the heavenly spirits. "And all the angels stood around about the throne." Apoc. vii, 11. "He was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood." Apoc. xix, 13. "And He had in His right hand seven stars." Apoc. i, 16.

*b.* A King of Infinite Power. His power extends over all kingdoms. "He is Lord of Lords, and King of kings." Apoc. xvii, 14. It extends over all the angels. "He hath put all

things under His feet." I Cor. xv, 26. * * Over all heavens. "All power is given to Me in heaven." Mt. xxviii, 18.

This infinitely great and powerful king being the host at the Holy Eucharist, it is a truly royal banquet.

2. *The Food Truly Royal.*

*a.* Of infinite value.

"It is the same food which at the Last Supper Jesus gave to His disciples, saying: "Take ye and eat, this is My body." Mt. xxvi, 26.

*b.* Of infinite sweetness.

"Thou didst feed Thy people with the food of Angels, and gavest them bread from heaven, * * * having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste." Wisd. xvi, 20. "There is no tongue which could sufficiently describe how delicious is this Sacrament, because in it we taste sweetness in its source." St. Thom. Aq.

## PART II.

### MANY REFUSE TO PARTAKE OF THE ROYAL TABLE.

1. *The Lukewarm.*

*a.* They are wanting in love for Jesus Christ.

The soul becomes lukewarm, when the fire of love begins to die out. Hence, Jesus is not an object of burning desire to such a soul. What marvel, if the lukewarm soul finds no taste in this royal supper?

*b.* In zeal for their salvation.

Lukewarm souls consider the path to heaven extremely smooth and easy. They scarcely perform the most necessary duties, and them but very imperfectly. They look upon earnest striving after virtue as enthusiasm and bigotry. * * This accounts sufficiently for their coldness and indifference towards this Most Blessed Sacrament.

2. *Those Absorbed in Worldly Affairs.*

They have

*a.* Other engagements.

"I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to try them: I

pray Thee have me excused." Lk. xiv, 19. One must settle accounts, bargain and sell. For Jesus no time is left. * * *

*b.* Other joys.

"I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Lk. xiv, 20. Public amusements, theaters, saloons, sinful familiarities with the other sex, do not allow the heart to feel any attraction towards the table of the Lamb of God.

3. *Those Addicted to Various Vices.*

*a.* Their mind is dead for heaven.

"They who are according to the flesh, relish the things that are of the flesh." Rom. viii, 5. The heart of the impure, the drunkard, etc., is drowned, as it were, in the intoxication of the senses. Wallowing in the mire of sin, how could they long for the bread descending from heaven?

*b.* Their habits become a second nature.

The heart of the communicant must be innocent, or at least cleansed from sin. "Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily (in the state of mortal sin), shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." I Cor. xi, 27. * * * Therefore, the heart must be cleansed by confession, and seriously renounce sin, upon which souls addicted to vice cannot resolve. Thus they feel disgust at this Blessed Supper, and stay away.

*Peroration:* Are there amongst you also any who loathe the table of the Heavenly King? How sorry I feel for them! Alas! your soul is in the greatest danger. "Amen, amen, I say unto you: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." John vi, 54. Oh! that the light of grace would shine to-day upon these lukewarm souls, that they might perceive their ingratitude against Jesus, and their hard-heartedness to themselves! * * Exhortation to frequent Communion. "Come, eat My bread, and drink the wine, which I have mingled for you." Prov. ix, 5. "Consider your negligence. You refresh so often your body on your journey, and you will not once in a month refresh your poor soul, that is pining away on her long pilgrimage?" St. Thomas of Villanova.

Joseph Schuen.

## II.

## LESSONS TAUGHT US BY THE HARVEST FIELDS.

As at the miraculous multiplication of bread in the desert, so God's blessing is manifested everywhere. In this present season the fruits of the fields grow and promise a rich harvest. The sight of the products of the earth teaches us many useful and wholesome lessons, such as the following:

1. Trust in God. He Who provides for millions, should He not provide for you also? Lk. xii, 6, 7, 24. His granary and store-house are inexhaustible, His power and bounty are unlimited. Is. l, 2.

2. By industry and economy render yourself worthy of God's blessing. Ps. cxxvii, 2.

3. Imitate God in His bounty and compassion, and come to the assistance of your needy neighbor. Heb. xiii, 16; Is. lviii, 7.

4. Of every gift of God make such use as is acceptable to Him; offer up sincere thanks, and remember the severe account you will have to give.

5. Be obedient to God in all other things. Whatever the Lord commands, is for our true welfare; as, for instance, keeping holy the Sabbath day. Is. lviii, 13.

Hugo of St. Victor used to say that all creatures address man in these words: "Take, give, and flee! Take the blessing: return obedience, and flee from the punishment of ingratitude."

Schili.

## Seventh Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.
### TO ABSTAIN FROM SIN IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR SALVATION.

"Every tree that yieldeth not good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire." Mt. vii, 19. Blinded by self-love, man often tries to persuade himself that he will be surely saved by merely abstaining from sin. This is a fatal error. For, avoiding sin is not sufficient to obtain life everlasting, but we must also perform good works. We shall be convinced of the truth of this assertion, by reflecting

I. On the duties imposed by the divine law.

II. On the scope of the divine law.

III. On the promise of the divine law.

#### PART I.

#### DUTIES IMPOSED BY THE DIVINE LAW.

I. The *Old Law* commands not only to avoid evil, but also to do good. We are not only obliged to abstain from what it forbids, but also to perform what it positively prescribes. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all." James ii, 10.

II. By the *Gospel* Christians are obliged to look up to Christ as their model, and conform their morals to this divine pattern; an obligation announced in the clearest and most forcible terms, and under threat of eternal punishment. "Whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." Lk. xiv, 27. "If any one remaineth not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire; and he burneth." John xv, 6. The barren fig tree was cursed by our Lord, and it withered away. Mt. xxi, 19. The unprofitable servant was cast into the exterior darkness, because he hid his talent in the earth. Mt. xxv, 30.

III. The *Holy Fathers* teach the same doctrine. "From this you see, that not only the robbers, the thieves, and malefactors are sentenced to the severest punishment, but also he who neglects to do good." St. Chrysostom. "It does not suffice to avoid evil, if you do no good works." St. Augustine.

PART II.

THE SCOPE OF THE DIVINE LAW.

I. The scope of the divine law is our *sanctification.* "You know what commandments I have given to you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification." I Thess. iv, 2, 3.

II. This scope cannot be obtained by merely abstaining from sin.

1. He who contents himself with merely avoiding sin, is the slave of spiritual sloth, the root of all vices * * * Besides, it is hardly credible that, where there is no virtue, there should be no vice.

2. According to the will of God, our sanctification must be such that our heart is not only cleansed from sin, but also the throne of virtue, as clearly appears

*a.* From His instructions to those whom He sent to announce His law. "Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations, and over kingdoms, to root up, and to pull down, and to waste and to destroy, and to build, and to plant." Jerem. i, 10.

*b.* From the history of the Ninivites: "God saw their *works*, that they were turned from their evil way." Jonas iii, 10. Examples are David and Job.

PART III.

THE PROMISE OF THE DIVINE LAW.

1. God promises us life everlasting, on condition of our keeping the commandments. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Mt. xix, 17.

II. In order to attain life everlasting it is, therefore, not sufficient only to avoid evil, but we must perform good works, the commandments not only *forbidding* what we must *avoid*, but also *commanding* us what we must *do*.

1. Such is the teaching of the Holy Scripture. "Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle? or who shall rest in Thy holy hill? He that walketh without blemish, and worketh justice." Ps. xiv, 1, 2. "Turn away from evil, and do good." Ps. xxxiii, 15.

2. Mere reason proves it. Would it not be sheer presumption to expect so great a reward by merely avoiding sin?

*Peroration:* Avail yourselves of every opportunity for performing good works, * * prayer, * * works of charity, * * frequent attendance at the holy sacrifice of Mass. * * * "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."

Bordoni.

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II.

## MAN'S CONSCIENCE.

"A good tree cannot yield bad fruit; neither can a bad tree yield good fruit." Mt. vii, 18. Hearing our Saviour's warning, "beware of false prophets," we think first of those false teachers, who, either by their words or writings, are false friends of our souls. The most dangerous false prophet, however, is within us; it is a false conscience. Our conscience, which a profound Christian thinker calls the most admirable of God's works on earth, equalled only by the stars of heaven, is the mother of all virtues, a constant spur for us to strive after justice and holiness. But this same conscience can be a false prophet too, leading man astray into the abyss of vices.

In order that the voice of our conscience may never turn out to be a false prophet to us, but may lead us to every virtue, I will explain to you the Catholic doctrine on conscience. For this purpose we consider:

I. What is conscience to the Christian?

II. How is the voice of conscience led astray and rendered false, and by what means can it be rectified?

### PART I.

### WHAT IS CONSCIENCE TO THE CHRISTIAN?

Every man has a conscience, which admonishes and blames

him against his own will. St. Paul says that the gentiles "show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts within themselves accusing them, or else defending them." Rom. ii, 15. Conscience is the voice of God, through which He speaks to our hearts, it being our teacher, monitor, and judge.

1. It is our *teacher*, instructing us in truth and justice. "Behold, I will send My angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared. Take notice of him, and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned: for he will not forgive, when thou hast sinned, and My name is in him." Ex. xxiii, 20, 21. These words, once spoken to Israel, may be addressed to every individual, since his conscience, as a guardian angel, guides him through this world. This teacher speaks everywhere, at all times, to everyone, to the king and to the beggar.

2. Conscience is the *monitor* and *counselor* of man, whenever he totters on the path of virtue. It raises its voice above the noise of the world and the storms of the passions. Not unlike a clock that goes on, regardless of what is passing round about it, the conscience will speak against man, whenever he deviates from the path of truth and justice.

3. Conscience is the *judge* of man. Like the trumpets of the judgment, its decisions penetrate into the sinful soul, reminding her of the Divine Justice, of the necessity of penance and amendment. This judge is incorruptible, tormenting the guilty soul with excruciating pain. "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Rom. ii, 9. The stern voice of this judge will never be silenced; in eternity it is the worm, which, as our Lord says, will never die.

From this it follows, that (1) in all our actions we must consult our conscience, as it is the rule by which the morality of our actions is judged; (2) that we are never allowed to act against our conscience, which speaks to us in the name of God, so much so, that we ought to follow an erroneous conscience, provided we are not aware of its being in error. "My just one

liveth by faith." Heb. x, 38. "All that is not of faith, is sin." Rom. xiv, 23. (3) That, when our conscience is in doubt in regard to the morality of an act, we are not allowed to perform this act. (4) That we should respect the voice of our neighbor's conscience, though it may not be in accord with our own.

PART II.

HOW MAN'S CONSCIENCE IS SOMETIMES LED ASTRAY, AND BY WHAT MEANS IT IS SET RIGHT AGAIN.

I. Man's conscience is led astray by our inherited ignorance, aided by prejudices and a perverse education. Some Christians, for instance, are of opinion, that if they attend regularly divine service, and frequent the Sacraments, their salvation is secured, though they calumniate their neighbors, are the slaves of covetousness, neglect the education of their children, etc. "There is a way that seemeth to a man right: and the ends thereof lead to death." Prov. xvi, 25.

Moreover, our passions find specious arguments to color and excuse our vices. Thus, habitual sinners will take the grossest trespasses of the divine law for trifles, or for mere weaknesses naturally connected with human nature. Who wonders, if our Lord, after so many warnings, will allow the voice of conscience to become silent, in order to punish the hardened sinner? "The wicked man, when he is come into the depth of sins, contemneth." Prov. xviii, 3. "My indignation shall rest in thee; and My jealousy shall depart from thee; and I will cease, and be angry no more." Ezech. xvi, 42.

Finally, so-called public opinion exercises a powerful influence on man's conscience. Few have courage enough to swim against the stream.

II. By what means can an erroneous conscience be rectified?

1. Reflect seriously before you act. Truth and virtue are too deeply engraved in man's heart not to be found after due investigation. We are so sharp-sighted in judging the steps of our neighbor, why should we not be able, after due deliberation, to judge in regard to our own morals?

2. The danger of erring is still less if we weigh our actions in the light of death and eternity. At the sight of death you will not deceive yourselves.

3. Follow the teaching of Jesus Christ as it is preached by the priests of your Holy Church, and abide by the decision of your confessor.

*Peroration:* Listen to the voice of your conscience. Let it be to you what the pillar of fire at night, and the cloud in daytime, were to the Israelites of old.

Joseph Ehrler.

## Eighth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.
### THE PARTICULAR JUDGMENT.

"Give an account of thy stewardship: for now thou canst not be steward." Lk. xvi, 2. The time will come, when our Lord will address these words to us: For, we are not proprietors, but only stewards, of all that we possess. This time, when every man has to give an account of his stewardship, will be the time of his death, when he has to undergo his Particular Judgment, so called to distinguish it from the General Judgment, which is to take place at the end of time.

PART I.

THERE IS A PARTICULAR JUDGMENT.

I. Doctrine of *Holy Scripture*. St. Paul says: "It is appointed for man once to die, and after this the judgment." Heb. ix, 27. Our Saviour in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. xvi, 19) says that the beggar died, and he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, and the rich man also died, and he was buried in hell. The reward and punishment, being executed immediately after death, presuppose a previous judgment. The same doctrine is inferred from the words addressed to the penitent thief on the cross: "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise." Lk. xxiii, 43.

II. The *Catholic Church* teaches the same doctrine explicitly by her daily preaching, and implicity by the doctrine on Purgatory, from which doctrine it follows that, after her departure from the body, the soul will be judged, and that then it will be decided, whether or no she has to be purified before enjoying the beatific vision.

PART II.

WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW, DOES THIS JUDGMENT TAKE PLACE?

A. *Time and place.*

I. In regard to the *time*, theologians agree that the judgment will take place immediately after death. For, in the same

moment when the soul enters into eternity, she receives what she has deserved in life, be it good or evil. But reward or punishment ought to be preceeded by a judgment.

II. The *place* of the judgment is where death will surprise you, because God, your judge, is everywhere.

B. *Who will be present?*

I. Your soul, in order to be judged. She will appear (1) separated from her body; (2) deprived of all earthly goods, such as wealth, honors, dignities, etc.; (3) forsaken by all men. King Ezechias being informed that he should die, exclaimed: "I shall behold man no more, nor the inhabitant of rest." Is. xxxviii, 11.

II. Your Guardian Angel, and Satan, whose attitude will be according to the condition of your soul.

III. Jesus Christ, Who will be your judge. "Neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath commissioned all judgment to the Son." John v, 22. The just will behold Him with joy, the sinner with terror. "The torments of the condemned will be more painful than the torments of hell." St. Basil. When Philip II, king of Spain, detecting one of his courtiers in a lie, reproached him, saying; "What! You could thus impose upon me!" the poor wretch died soon after from fear and shame. "When Joseph said to his brethren: I am Joseph: is my father yet living? his brethren could not answer him, being struck with exceeding great fear." Gen. xlv, 3. What will the sinner answer when seeing Jesus before him, and hearing him say: Behold, I am thy Saviour and Judge Whom thou hast despised? "All iniquity shall stop her mouth." Ps. cvi, 42.

C. *The proceedings.*

I. First the *accusation* takes place. The accusers are:

1. *Satan*, whom St. John calls "the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night." Apoc. xii, 10. With hatred and fury he will proffer whatever is known to him.

2. *Conscience*, which will urge everyone to make known his crimes. "Their conscience bearing witness to them * * * in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." Rom. ii, 15, 16.

3. The *sins*. "Their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them." Wisd. iv, 20. "The sins will say: Villain! do you know us? We are your doings; we shall never leave you." St. Bernard.

4. The *Guardian Angel*, whose advice and inspirations the soul has so obstinately slighted and resisted.

II. Then the *examination* takes place. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil. II Cor. v, 10. Accordingly, the examination will extend:

1. To the *good works* we may have performed or omitted. "When I shall take a time, I will judge justices," Ps. lxxiv, 3, *i. e.*, I will judge even such actions as have the appearance of being just. We must give an account of what use we have made of the benefits received from God: *a. Benefits of nature*, such as wealth, honor, health, beauty, powers of soul and body. *b. Graces:* inspirations, instructions obtained by sermons and books; the Holy Sacraments, and numberless interior graces.

2. To *evil deeds*, which we may have committed by ourselves, or have caused others to commit. We must give an account of all the sins of our past life, whether they have been committed *a.* by *thoughts:* "Inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly." Wisd. i, 9; or *b.* by *words:* "I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment." Mt. xii, 36; or *c.* by *deeds*, secret or public: "I will judge thee according to thy ways: and I will set all thy abominations against thee." Ezech. vii, 3. "Judge not before the time: until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." I Cor. iv, 5. "And all things that are done, God will bring into judgment for every error." Ecclus. xii, 14.

D. The *sentence and its execution.*

I. The examination being completed, the sentence will be pronounced.

1. It will be infinitely *gratifying to the just.* "Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord." Mt. xxv, 23.

2. Infinitely *terrifying to the reprobate.* "Depart from Me, ye cursed." Mt. xxv, 41. "Depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity." Lk. xiii, 27.

II. Then the soul of the just, provided she has to make no satisfaction in purgatory, will be led to heaven by jubilant choirs of angels, whilst the soul of the sinner will be dragged by cursing devils into the depth of hell. "And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting." Mt. xxv, 46.

PART III.

HOW WE SHOULD PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE JUDGMENT.

In order to escape the dreadful consequences of the Particular Judgment, say frequently with St. Bernard: "As one who is already judged I will be set before the face of wrath." For this purpose:

I. Often reflect on the account you will have to give after your death. "In all thy works remember thy last end: and thou shalt never sin." Ecclus. vii, 40.

II. Confess in all humility that you have been heretofore a bad steward over the goods entrusted by God to your care. This *fear* is:

1. *Not without foundation.* By reflecting on your own sinfulness and the severity of the Judge, you will be convinced thereof. When St. Arsenius, after having led a life of the most severe penance, in the 120th year of his age felt the approach of death, he began to weep bitterly. The bystanders inquiring of him, whether he too feared to appear before the judgment of Jesus Christ, he answered: "Indeed, I fear to-day just as much as on the day when I commenced my life of penance."

2. *Very salutary.* How many have been protected by this fear against sin, and inflamed with zeal in the performance of good works. St. Augustine acknowledges that nothing protected him

more against the attacks of sensuality than the fear of death and the future judgment.

III. Make the Mother of God and the Saints generally your friends by "the mammon of iniquity. "Stretch out thy hand to the poor, that thy expiation and thy blessing may be perfected." Ecclus. vii, 36.

IV. Court the favor of the Judge by vivid faith, firm confidence, true and sincere amendment of your life. While you walk in the light of the sun, the way leading to forgiveness is open to you.

*Peroration:* It is then beyond doubt that after our death a severe judgment will be held upon everyone of us. Are we able to pass through it with safety? "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." I Cor. xi, 31.

Wiser.

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## II.

## EVENING PRAYER.

Great was the terror of the steward on hearing the words of his master: "Give an account of thy stewardship!" The same account will be required of each one of us in the evening of his life; and God only knows how great will be our terror in that dreadful hour. The terror, however, would considerably diminish, if we would require of ourselves an account in the evening of each day, as good Christians are wont to do. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." I Cor. xi, 31. The evening being the appropriate time for this exercise, let me call your attention to the duty and manner of performing our evening devotion.

The evening devotion should comprise thanksgiving, examination of conscience, and contrition for our sins.

### PART I.

### WE SHOULD SAY THANKS FOR THE BENEFITS RECEIVED DURING THE DAY.

I. The duty to close the day by prayer, is insinuated:

1. By the *command* (Ex. xxix, 41) to offer a lamb every day in the evening. This daily sacrifice was intended for all

the children of Israel, reminding them of their duty to offer daily thanks to their greatest benefactor. Let not carnal-minded Jews put you to shame. Imitate King David, who said: "Let my prayer be directed as incense in Thy sight; the lifting up of my hands as evening sacrifice." Ps. cxl, 2.

2. By the *exhortations* of Holy Writ: "In the nights lift up your hands to the holy places, and bless ye the Lord." Ps. cxxxiii, 2. "Pray without ceasing." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end;" consequently the Lord God should be the object of our first and last thoughts.

3. By the *example* of Jesus Christ and His Saints. After having made tiresome journeys, preached, healed the sick, He would retire, when night set in, and pray in solitude, often entire nights. How heart-stirring was His night-prayer after the Last Supper! All true disciples of the Lord, however pressing the duties of their calling might be, complied with this special duty.

4. By the *obligation* imposed upon the Clergy to recite Vespers and Complins every evening, the Church reminds her other children to act likewise, according to time and circumstances.

II. In a special manner we should make acts of thanksgiving for the benefits of the past day.

1. Holy Scripture exhorts us to be careful in discharging this duty. "Every best gift, and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." James i, 17. "In Him we live, and we move, and we are." Acts xvii, 28. Now, if all is from God, we owe Him our most sincere and heartfelt thanks.

2. The great number and variety of benefits demand our thanks. Every moment of our life is God's gift. Think of the many evils against which God protected you; of His spiritual and bodily benefits, etc. Like a stream, God's beneficence flows over your soul; and should not your heart overflow with the most ardent gratitude?

3. A well-regulated self-love demands it. Thanks are new

petitions, whilst ingratitude closes the hands of God. If man forgets God, God will forget man. "If thou forget the Lord thy God, * * * behold, now I foretell thee that thou shalt utterly perish." Deut. viii, 19. Thanks for the benefits received naturally suggest the question: *How* did I return thanks for them? That is:

PART II.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

1. Men engaged in worldly business may be regarded as our models in the performance of this duty, since they anxiously look over the receipts and expenses of the day. Even the unlucky gambler counts his losses, though by so doing he recovers nothing. We have more urgent reasons to keep an every-day account, our most precious goods being at stake, and it being still in our power to adjust our accounts and supply all deficiencies.

2. This daily examination of ourselves is very necessary:

*a.* Because we stumble and fall every day, through culpable heedlessness, through hastiness and levity, or even after full reflection. Now, if the transgressions of weeks and months have accumulated, how will you be able to hold an accurate judgment over yourself, how know yourself, how repent and make restitution?

*b.* Because a hidden fault is very pernicious, taking deep root in the heart, poisoning it thoroughly, and producing the most fatal consequences.

*c.* Because without examination the tenderness of conscience is lost, whereas, on the contrary, by habitual self-examination the eyes of our soul are sharpened, and her horror of sin continually increases.

3. The time most appropriate for it is the evening.

*a.* Evening witnesses the close of the daily work, when we are naturally inclined to reflect on the doings of the past day, as the wanderer looks back on the way he has made.

*b.* On account of circumstances singularly favorable: the stillness, after the close of our daily pursuits, the solemnity of

the hour. The soul prepared by prayer is less subject to self-deceit, especially at the reflection, that this night may be the last, to be succeeded by the night of the grave.

4. Give then an account of your stewardship on this day.

*a.* Call the servants and debtors of God: your understanding, imagination, memory, your heart, your eyes, ears, tongue, hands, and feet. Ask them: "How much do you owe my Lord?"

*b.* Examine yourself on the duties of your state of life. How much do you owe the Lord God as father and mother, as head of a family, as son or daughter, etc.? Thus act every day, in good earnest, as if it were the last account. Be not excelled in prudence by the children of darkness; in zeal by Seneca, a heathen philosopher, who, for love of a naturally honest life, did what you ought to do for God and your immortal soul.

At this examination good and evil deeds will present themselves to your mind. For the good give thanks to God, by Whose grace you have performed every good act. In regard to your sinful thoughts, words, and deeds, make acts of perfect contrition and good resolutions.

PART III.

PERFECT CONTRITION AND FIRM RESOLUTIONS.

1. If you have committed mortal sins, consider:

*a.* You may *die this very night.* For how many will it be their last night indeed? "At what hour you think not, the Son of man will come." Lk. xii, 40. "I will come to thee as a thief; and thou shalt not know at what hour I will come to thee." Apoc. iii, 3.

*b.* What *must* follow an unprovided death? Eternal damnation, hell, out of which there is no redemption. This does, no doubt, follow from the nature of mortal sin, from the relation of the sinner to God, and from the evident fact that sin, unless retracted in this world, remains permanent, and abides in the soul for ever.

*c.* In such a case your salvation can be secured by perfect contrition. Therefore, make first an act of divine charity; from

this motive repent of your sins, and make the firm resolution to confess all your sins. The warning of the Apostle (Eph. iv, 26), "Let not the sun go down upon your anger," is applicable to every mortal sin, inasmuch as the anger of God is weighing on every mortal sin.

2. If your sins be only *venial*, it is advisable to make an act of contrition for them also. Or, would you have the courage to appear with them before the Son of man, "Who hath eyes as a flame of fire?" Apoc. ii, 18. They would defer your glorious union with God, till expiated by a most painful penance. Repenting of them, promise for the morrow to be more faithful in little things.

*Peroration:* After such an evening devotion, retire with modesty, mindful of the presence of God and your holy Guardian Angel; recommend your body and soul into the hands of your Heavenly Father; keep your mind occupied with pious thoughts and aspirations, till the desired rest shall close your eyes. Weinzierl.

## Ninth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### AGAINST THE PROFANATION OF THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Our churches are the houses of God. He abides in them as the *Hidden* God, which may explain the frequent profanations and sins committed against the houses of divine worship. For, who would dare to dishonor the *visible* awful majesty of God with so many signs of contempt? * * * And yet these profanations are condemned by the very manner of the presence of God in our churches.

PART I.

OUR PRIDE IS CONDEMNED BY HIS HUMILIATION.

I. Consider how the Son of God is humility and self-abasement itself in our churches.

1. He abides here in a narrow house built by men. "Thus saith the Lord: Heaven is My throne, and the earth My footstool: what is this house that you will build to Me? and what is this place of My rest? My hand made all these things, and all these things were made, saith the Lord." Isai. lxvi, 1.

2. He divested Himself of all the signs of His glory and majesty, hiding Himself under the form of bread.

3. In return He receives our cold adoration, nay, our many offenses.

4. Compare His humble sacramental state with the manifestation of His glory in the burning bush on Mount Sinai, Thabor, at His Resurrection, etc.

II. Consider how the wretched sinner displays his vanity and impudence:

1. By pride and extravagance in dressing.

2. By frivolous looks, conversations, etc.

3. Many scoff at the Incarnate God, as Michol scoffed at David, (II Sam. vi, 16, ff,) so that to them the words of the Lord may be applied: "I honor My Father, and you have dishonored Me." John viii, 49.

PART II.

OUR INATTENTION AND CARELESSNESS ARE CONDEMNED BY HIS FERVOR AND ZEAL.

Our divine Saviour in the temple is intent upon the increase of His Father's glory and the salvation of men.

I. His sacramental presence is a perpetual continuation of His life and work on earth.

1. Consecration is no less a mystery than His birth at Bethlehem.

2 His obedience and retired life at Nazareth, His miracle at Cana are renewed.

3. His benefits are renewed, and His doctrines preached incessantly.

4. He finds and receives again the Samaritan woman, Magdalen, Zacheus, etc.

II. We recompense His kindness with ingratitude and coldness of heart.

1. With a thousand distractions we enter the sanctuary, whilst we should compose our mind and collect our thoughts.

2. Our imagination is occupied with external or even sinful objects, our mind absent, our heart dry and unmoved.

3. Many are disgusted at the length of the divine service, or feel uncomfortable, whilst Jesus is burning with love.

4. How different the zeal of the first Christians in the catacombs, or of the pious pilgrims on the sacred soil of Palestine!

PART III.

OUR SINS COMMITTED IN HIS PRESENCE ARE CONDEMNED BY HIS ACTS OF SACRIFICE.

We should be amazed and tremble when we call to mind.

I. The atonement daily offered by the Saviour for our sins. Here on our altar we behold

1. The Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world. John i, 29.

2. Our Eternal Priest and Mediator of the New Covenant. Heb. vii, 21, 25.

3. The new Golgotha, where He renews every day His Sacred Passion in an unbloody manner. I Cor. xi. Application of the parable, Mark xii, 6, ff.

II. The malice of the Christians.

1. They come as sinners, and leave as still greater sinners.

2. They challenge the divine wrath, whilst Jesus endeavors to appease it.

3. They sin like the Israelites bowing before the golden calf, whilst Moses on the mount lifted up for them his hands to heaven.

4. They virtually scoff at Jesus, as His enemies did, when He was dying on the cross.

III. The punishment of the profaners of the house of God.

1. In the Old Testament we read of dreadful examples.

2. In the New Testament God will punish much more severely the outrages committed by the sinner against His house, against the sinner himself, and against his fellow-Christians. Application of Mark xii, 9.

*Peroration:* Whenever we go to church, let us call to mind: What is Jesus Christ doing here, and what am I to do here? In which state is Jesus here, in which am I? This comparison will regulate and sanctify our conduct.

Segaud.

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## II.

## TEARS OF PENANCE PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

The tears in the eyes of our Lord, shed over the impenitent city, remind us of our own impenitence and of our eternal perdition, if we should be impenitent to the end. Jerusalem could yet have escaped its ruin, but it was not willing. Oh! let us secure our salvation, "knowing the things that are for our peace." It is God's will that we should live; He appeals to us with unspeakable tenderness: "Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning." Joel ii, 12. "In weeping, and in mourning." Your heart is shocked at these

words, as if you heard them for the first time. How few know the value of the tears of true repentance; how rarely are they shed! This sad truth has induced me to explain to you:

1. How great a power tears exercise over the heart of God.

2. How utterly unfounded are the excuses alleged for their absence.

## PART I.

### THE POWERFUL EFFECTS OF HOLY TEARS ON THE HEART OF GOD.

How deaply the heart of God is moved by sincere tears of penance, shed from supernatural motives, we must infer:

1. From the irresistible power of tears over the human heart.

*a.* Tell us of this great power, unhappy wife of a rough, cruel husband. Your patience, meekness and tenderness, can not move his unfeeling soul. At last your heart seems to break with undeserved grief, you seek relief in tears, and the hardened soul is moved. You are witnesses, victims of poverty, who by tears, the soul's blood, have prevailed more upon the rich than by the most pitiful description of your wants, and by your most urgent supplications.

*b.* This human feeling owes its existence to the Creator of human nature. Through Him the powerful becomes weak at the sight of tears. This is a praiseworthy weakness, so much so that he who would not be moved by the tears of the distressed, would by general consent be considered a monster in human shape. Consequently, this feeling, is by universal consent, a perfection, a beautiful quality of the human heart.

*c.* From this it follows that the heart of God is moved by tears more than any human heart, since He is the highest perfection. If in his times David could reproach the infidels by saying: "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that formed the eye, doth He not consider?" (Ps. xciii, 9); we are also justified in saying: "He that gave man a tender heart, shall He have an unfeeling heart? How could it be reconciled with the names: Father, God of mercy, of all bounty; friend and spouse?

Now, the principal effect of bounty, especially of an infinite bounty, is the inability to resist the tears of a repenting heart.

2. Experience bears testimony to the efficacy of penitential tears. I call on you as witnesses, who sigh and sob bitterly at the remembrance of your sins. Before the tears flow, your soul is encompassed by gloomy clouds: "For my iniquities are gone over my head; and as a heavy burden are become heavy upon me. My sores are putrefied and corrupted because of my foolishness * * * I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly: I roared with the groaning of my heart." Ps. xxxvii, 5–9. But after shedding tears of penance, your soul finds rest, and the sudden peace pervading your heart and drying your tears—is it not like the ray of the sun which, penetrating through the cloud, again raises the flower beaten to the ground by the unmerciful storm? Does not your heart resemble the earth parched by the summer heat, but refreshed by a sudden rain? Praised be the ineffable mercy of our God Who, as He clothed the first sinner, so by tears softens the bitterness of penance in every sinner!

3. The records of *Holy Writ* convince us.

*a.* In the *Old Testament. Agar* wandering in the wilderness of Bersabee, homeless and a forlorn wanderer, together with her boy, lifted up her voice and wept. And an Angel of God called to Agar and saved her and her boy. Gen. xxi, 14–19. How much greater should be your hope, mournful parents, who weep over the spiritual ruin of your children? And have you no greater hope who weep over the death of your own soul? *Ezechias* lies prostrate on his death bed, his death being announced by the prophet. With tears he cries out to the Lord, Who says to him by His prophet: "I have heard thy prayer, and I have seen thy tears: and behold, I have healed thee." IV Kings xx, 5. You do not pray for the life of your body, but of your soul, and your tears will certainly find grace before the Lord. Penitent *David.*

*b.* In the *New Testament.* The *widow at Naim.* "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said to her: Weep not," (Lk. vii, 13,) and He raised her son from the dead.

The *sisters of Lazarus.* "When Jesus saw Mary weeping, and the Jews that were come with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit, and troubled Himself," (St. John xi, 33,) and restored Lazarus to life. Above all, you see the efficacy of tears in the example of Mary Magdalen and of Peter, who spoke only by their tears. Jesus Himself weeps over the City of Jerusalem, because she weeps not, because she refuses to make use of this means of salvation.

4. To convince you how efficacious the tears of penance are, I will call

*a.* On God as witness, who promised forgiveness to His people, if they "be converted to Him with all their heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning." Joel ii, 12. "Blessed are ye that weep now: for you shall laugh." Lk, vi, 21.

*b.* On the Church, endeavoring by her entreaties, her sublime service, her majestic chants and moving prayers, to stir the heart of the sinner.

*c.* On all the penitents of the Old and New Covenants, who washed their souls by burning tears, and who were purified and justified by God. Ninive. The Jews at the rivers of Babylon. Thebais.

But it should be sufficient to remind you of the tears which Jesus shed when seeing the city, and when suffering on the Cross. Yet, as once of Jerusalem, so He now complains of the Christians who do not share His bitterness.

For, though the heart of God is moved by nothing more than by tears of penance, nothing is more neglected than this weeping over our sins.

## PART II.

### WHY SO MANY CHRISTIANS REFUSE TO WEEP OVER THEIR SINS.

The earth is the vale of tears. No one knows it better than the priest. Yet, in vain he looks for tears in the confessional, at the Communion table, in the eyes of those who are dangerously sick. He hears many excuses.

1. I am not so tender-hearted that I could weep.

*a.* It is either untrue: Did you never shed tears? Perhaps, from the slightest motive, musing over a sentimental novel, at the theatre, in adversity. You boasted of your tender feeling.

*b.* Or, it is partly true: You feel no zeal for God or your soul. This is your fault. Did you ever pray for the grace of tears to Him Who called the water forth out of the rock in the desert? Did you seek retirement to meditate seriously on the supernatural truths?

2. I know not about what to weep.

This may be a sincere confession, but it is humiliating at the same time, as it gives evidence of your spiritual indifference. You will find urgent reasons to sob and weep:

*a.* By reflecting on the loss of God, the sovereign good, Whom sin has driven from your soul. "My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy God? These things I remembered, and poured out my soul in me." Ps. xli, 4, 5. Verily, your condition is lamentable, if you consider who is your present idol.

*b.* By reflecting on your own misery. Your past life has been vain and fruitless, is contaminated with injustice and all kinds of sin. Your soul deprived of her strength, indifferent to good acts, torn by passions. A severe account awaits you. "Weep for yourselves and for your children." Lk. xxiii, 28. "Thy arrows are fastened in me, and Thy hand hath been strong upon me. There is no health in my flesh, because of Thy wrath; there is no peace for my bones, because of my sins." Ps. xxxvii, 3, ff.

*c.* By longing for the everlasting joys in our heavenly home, far from which we linger in exile like the Jews when led into captivity. "Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept, when we remembered Sion," etc. Ps. cxxxvi, 1. "Woe is me that my sojourning is prolonged." Ps. cxix, 5. Can you forget the heavenly Sion, or remember it without tears?

*d.* By meditating on the Cross and Sacred Passion of Jesus Christ. Why did He suffer? For whom? What did He suffer in body and soul? And you have no tear for Him, Who wept so compassionately for you?

*Peroration:* No more excuses! Penitential tears are all-powerful. Let us in our daily prayers beseech the Lord to grant us the grace of at least spiritual tears. "Come, let us adore and fall down and weep before the Lord that made us. For He is the Lord our God; and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. To-day if you shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Ps. xciv, 6.

Bishop Joseph Colmar.

## The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

### I.

### THE THRICE HAPPY TRIUMPH OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

"Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her." Lk. x, 42. This festival day reminds us of two events: the death and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After the descent of the Holy Ghost, she remained in Jerusalem under the care of the disciple whom Jesus loved. When, after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, a heavy persecution arose against the young Church, the Mother of Jesus took, together with St. John, her abode in Ephesus, in Asia Minor, for which event the Fathers of the Council of Ephesus, A. D. 431, eulogized this city, saying that for this reason the faithful come there in pilgrimages from all parts of the world, with fervent devotion. All records agree in stating that she lived to an old age, which was terminated by a glorious triumph. Let me invite you, on this day of the consummation of her glory, to reflect on her three-fold triumph, which will present to our mind the full meaning of this feast, viz.: her triumph before, during, and after, her Assumption.

#### PART I.

#### HER TRIUMPH BEFORE HER ASSUMPTION.

The Mother of God died a painless death, in consequence of the ardent love which was consuming the flame of her temporal life.

1. "God made not death." Wisd. i, 13. "By sin death entered into this world." Rom. v, 12. Now, it is the doctrine of the Church that Mary was exempt from original sin, and had never been contaminated with the least personal sin. Consequently, she was not subject to the law of death.

If God, nevertheless, decreed her death, it was because of her conformity with her Divine Son, Whom she was to resemble as in life, so also in death.

Are we, however, not bound to assume that her death, because not caused by sin, was painless, that it was a quiet, gentle slumber, through which she passed into eternity? that it was like the sweet rest the laborer longs for after the fatigues of the day? We are certainly justified in thus viewing her departure from this world, because a death dreadful by the pains caused by sin would be unbecoming the Mother of life, conceived without sin.

Besides, she felt no anguish of mind, as was the case with many Saints when reflecting on their sins. Nor did Satan dare to approach the valiant woman who had crushed his infernal head. We cannot escape the death caused by sin, but we can and must escape *death in sin.*

2. Mary died from excess of love for her Son and God. Neither sickness nor weakness, but love, was the cause of her death. "The love of God," says St. Bernard, "was the sword that not only wounded, but also pierced Mary's heart." The heavenly fire of love burnt so intensely in her heart, that it consumed her life by degrees and brought on her death, the frame of her body being too feeble to support this furnace of sacred love. The love wherewith she loved and was loved, excels in an incomparably sublime manner the love of all choirs of the Angels and Saints. Divine love consumed her at last as a holocaust of the sweetest odor. Thus she died in an ecstasy of love, soaring up into the embrace of the love of her Son. Such is the sweet language of St. Francis of Sales. As to us, we cannot die *from* love to God; but let us take care to die *in* the love of God. Death is but the echo of life. As man lives, so he dies. Very few of those who live in sin, will die in divine grace, in the love of God.

## PART II.

### HER TRIUMPH AT HER ASSUMPTION.

Her soul was immediately received into the heavenly realms. And what was the fate of her sacred body? Was it to be given to corruption, to take part only on the Last Day in the general

resurrection? God forbid that we should utter an assertion so derogatory to the honor of the Blessed Virgin. It has ever been the pious tradition of the infallible Church that, after her body had been in the sepulchre for a short space of time for the sake of her greater conformity with her Divine Son, her soul was reunited with her body; and then the Mother of God was, body and soul, received into the heavenly mansions. The reasons for this doctrine must be clear and convincing to every one who is of good will.

1. Neither the Latin nor the Greek Christians ever boasted of possessing relics of the body of the Blessed Virgin, which, great as their affections for the relics of the Saints were, cannot be explained, unless by the supposition that her body had disappeared from the sepulchre.

2. Can any of you find it in accord with Christian feeling that Jesus Christ should have suffered the living tabernacle, wherein He dwelt for nine months, to be left to corruption? The mere question is offensive to your ears.

3. The body of man is subject to corruption in consequence of sin. But Mary never was defiled with sin. Ergo. The reason why God suffered the Blessed Virgin to die, speaks for her resurrection also, viz.: her conformity with her Son, Who arose again from death the third day.

4. Tradition teaches the same. St. John Damascene relates an immemorial tradition, stating that at the death of the Blessed Virgin the Apostles had been carried by the power of Almighty God to Jerusalem. They witnessed her happy death, surrounded by the glory of God, whilst the angelic choirs were singing celestial canticles. They laid her body in a sepulchre at Gethsemani, where they heard the songs of the angels for three days, when they opened the sepulchre, because the Apostle Thomas had arrived after her death. They did not find, however, the sacred body, but an indescribably sweet odor came forth from the tomb. The Church has embodied this record in her office of the fourth day of the Octave of this feast. There is not one Father of the Church who would not teach this doctrine.

Our bodies, being sinful, will be reduced to dust and ashes. On the Last Day God will call them forth out of their graves, that they may receive either eternal torments for a short sinful pleasure, or eternal happiness, for the few pains and trials of our short earthly pilgrimage.

## PART III.

### HER TRIUMPH AFTER HER ASSUMPTION.

When Mary was received, body and soul, into the heavenly mansions, she was exalted above all the Angels and Saints, and placed at the right of her Son. "The queen stood on Thy right hand, in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety." Ps. xliv, 10. This triumph is due to the Blessed Virgin by reason of both her dignity and her merits.

1. *By reason of her dignity.* No one doubts that the daughter of the king holds a higher rank than his servants. Mary is eminently the daughter of the Heavenly Father, because she is the mother of His Son. The spouse of the king ranks higher than his servants. Mary is the spouse of the Holy Ghost. Lk. i, 35. Mary is in the strictest sense the Mother of God. Where is a dignity to be compared to this? The Angels are so much inferior to Mary, as the servants are to the daughter, spouse, and Mother of God. "In the midst of her own people she shall be exalted, and shall be admired in the holy assembly. And in the multitude of the Elect she shall have praise, and among the blessed she shall be blessed." Ecclus. xxiv, 3.

2. *By reason of her merits.* God, in crowning the Blessed Virgin on this day, regarded more her merits than her dignity. Faith teaches that the rewards of the Blessed are in the strictest proportion to their merits. "He who soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who soweth in blessings, shall also reap of blessings." II Cor. ix, 6. Mary was incessantly occupied with loving and serving God more and more. She never received any grace without co-operating with it. Thus Sanctifying Grace increased in her soul to an incomprehensible degree.

She excelled all the Saints and Angels in virtue, being the

queen of the Angels, the queen of the Apostles, of the Martyrs, and Virgins. She was a model to those in the married state. What wonder, if the Church, to praise her virtue, selects figures and similitudes from what is most beautiful and perfect in nature, from the most splendid works of the Creator? Cf. Ecclus. xxiv, 17-19, 23. If she far excels all the Saints in virtue, she excels them in glory also. "As the splendor of the sun excels the splendor of all the stars, so the glory of the divine Mother excels the glory of all the Saints." St. Basil.

*Peroration:* Strive to share in the happiness of your triumphant mother. In heaven there are no afflictions. "God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes; and death shall be no more: nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more; for the former things are passed away." Apoc. xxi, 4. On earth you search in vain after true happiness. Heaven is, besides, the place of infinite joy. "The eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." I. Cor. ii, 9. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, and our sweetest mother, intercede for us, that we may join thy triumph in heaven!

John Ev. Zollner.

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## II.

## BOTH THE DEATH AND ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN WERE THE EFFECT OF EXCESSIVE LOVE.

The two mysteries of the death and assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary testify to the power of love. For, the excess of love was the cause of both her death and her coronation.

### PART I.

### LOVE RELEASED MARY FROM THIS WORLD.

It is true, Mary left this earth in consequence of a natural death. Nevertheless, she conquered cruel death by dying from excess of love to her divine Son. Her tender affection for Jesus made her heart sigh for death, hastened and sweetened it.

I. She could die without fear and anxiety. She had no reason to fear,

1. On account of her *prolonged life;* for it had increased with her days in sanctity and merits. For most men an old age is the cause of a severer account they have to render to the Divine Judge.

2. On account of the *abundance of her graces.* She received them with humble thanks, exercised the greatest zeal in making good use of them; she augmented and glorified them. We are unfaithful servants.

3. On account of her *exalted dignity*, of which she made herself worthy by an equally exalted virtue. The mighty on earth will be convinced on the Day of Judgment how dreadful it is to have filled the highest positions in life without the requisite virtues.

4. On account of *past sins*, the remembrance of which made the greatest Saints fear. Mary was not guilty of any sin; her conscience bore witness to her that God had ever been the only object of her affections. She could, then, expect death with unbounded hope.

II. She could die without grief, nay, with joy and exultation. For to die, was to her

1. To be delivered from unutterable afflictions, which this queen of Martyrs had to endure on earth, especially from her own people in Israel, in their hatred against the Church of her Son. She died from love—longing for her only Beloved—like a light consumed by its own fire.

2. To be united with the only object of her affections. Her sacred body, too, longed for the living God. Body and soul desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Truly, a death which only love had caused. In a similar way, the just man may expect death with confidence, after he has served God all his lifetime, co-operated with the grace of God, complied with the duties of his state of life, and detested and carefully avoided sin. He has not set his heart on creatures, but on God, the Creator of all things.

PART II.

LOVE CROWNED MARY IN HEAVEN.

The Divine Son crowned His Mother with glory, similar to that which He had received Himself after His cruel Passion and Death. We ascribe it to His ardent love for His Blessed Mother.

I. In the sepulchre He arrayed her virginal body in the glory of His own incorruptibility, which triumph was due to her *purity*. It is offensive to pious ears to assert that the body of God's Mother, which had been the tabernacle of the Second Divine Person, should be given up to corruption. The same God Who has not suffered the bodies of many other Saints to see corruption, should not grant the same privilege to the queen of Saints? The sepulchre of the Mother of God was glorious indeed. What will be the lot of our body, which is now the object of our most tender cares? Let us love our body, but for heaven's sake.

II. He made her partake of his own exaltation in heaven, which triumph was due to her *humility*. No human tongue is able to describe this glory and magnificence. All the splendors and spectacles on earth are not beautiful enough to suggest the faintest idea of the splendor, homage, and joy, of Mary's solemn entrance into heaven. It was a triumph such as was becoming only the Mother of God, a triumph over which heaven was in raptures. What kind of homage do we pay to the exalted queen of heaven?

III. He shared with her the glory of His own mediatorship with the Father. Through the Mother the graces, merited by the Son, come down upon us. She is the mother of the Judge and the queen of heaven. She is willing and able to assist in our striving for the eternal crown. She is anxious to help all men, especially the children of the Catholic Church, who recognize her as their mother. How great is the power of intercession given to our dearest Lady! And how little, in comparison with it, is our confidence.

*Peroration:* Let us, by fervent prayer and a virtuous life, induce the queen of heaven to intercede for us incessantly, that we, as her children, may praise with her the King of Glory for evermore. Perusseau.

# REPERTORIUM

# ORATORIS SACRI,

CONTAINING OUTLINES OF

## SIX HUNDRED SERMONS,

FOR ALL THE

SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR;

ALSO FOR OTHER SOLEMN OCCASIONS.

COMPILED

FROM THE WORKS OF EMINENT PREACHERS

OF VARIOUS AGES AND NATIONS

BY A SECULAR PRIEST.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

RIGHT REV. JOSEPH DWENGER, D. D.

BISHOP OF FORT WAYNE.

## VOL. I.

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## Tenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### THE INFINITE TREASURE WE POSSESS IN THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF MASS.

With profound humility, and full of confidence in the divine mercy, the Publican enters the temple of Jehovah. How much greater should be our humility, reverence, zeal and confidence, when entering a Catholic house of God, particularly when attending at the Holy Sacrifice of Mass! Therefore, it is mortifying to Christian feeling to witness sometimes the unbecoming behavior in our churches, especially at the great Sacrifice. Is it lack of faith, or of knowledge? Or is it sacrilegious indifference? * * That you may never be guilty of such sinful conduct, consider what a treasure we possess in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.

#### PART I.

#### THE HOLY SACRIFICE IS THE MEANS OF KNOWING GOD IN THE MOST PERFECT MANNER.

I. To honor God, is the principal destiny of all creatures.

1. For this purpose He created the angels. "Let all the angels of God adore Him." Heb. i, 6. "Praise ye Him, all His Angels; praise ye Him, all His hosts." Ps. cxlviii, 2. They glorify God by the excellence of their nature, and actually by their ministry and by the praises they bring before Him.

2. Such is the principal destiny even of all irrational beings. "Let all Thy works, O Lord, praise Thee." Ps. cxliv, 10. "Where wast thou, when the morning stars praised Me together, and all the sons of God made a joyful melody?" Job xxxviii, 7. They praise God necessarily—as witnesses of His power, wisdom, etc.

3. It is pre-minently the principal duty of man. "Everyone that calleth upon My name, I have created him for My glory: I have formed him and made him." Is. xliii, 7. "He hath predesti-

nated us * * * to the praise of the glory of His grace." Eph. i, 5, 6.

II. But all glory that creatures can give must fall infinitely short of being worthy of God.

1. To God infinite honor is due, because He is infinite in His being and perfections. "Glorify the Lord as much as ever you can: for He will yet far exceed * * * When you exalt Him, put forth all your strength, and be not weary: for you can never go far enough." Eccles. xliii, 32.

2. The honors rendered to God by creatures are limited, imperfect, because their nature is limited, imperfect * * Even the Angels are not stainless in His sight.

3. By the Holy Sacrifice of Mass the highest, nay an infinite honor, is paid to God.

*a.* The Priest is of infinite dignity. "For the self-same Who has sacrificed Himself on the Cross, sacrifices Himself through the ministry of the priests." Trid. Sess. xxii, cp. 2. "It is the Son consubstantial with the Father, begotten from all eternity, made man for us in time, in whom the Father is well pleased." Mk. i, 11. "It was fitting that we should have such a High-Priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and made higher than the heavens," etc. Heb. vii, 26.

*b.* The victim is of infinite value. It is the same victim that was once offered on Mount Calvary, "one and the same host." Trid. l. c., consequently the human nature united with the Sacred Person of the Blessed Trinity. Therefore, the Holy Mass includes (1) His meritorious Incarnation: "O exalted dignity of the priests, in whose hands Christ is made man again." St. Augustine. (2) His meritorious life, devoted to the Father's glory, with its continual prayers and mortifications, etc. (3) His Sacred Passion. (4) His infinitely meritorious death. What are in comparison to all this the praises of all the Angels, and Saints, and of the just still living upon earth?

4. God accepts this precious sacrifice, as if it were ours, considers the honor thereby exhibited to Him, as if paid by us, whenever we cause the celebration of Holy Mass, or attend it

with due devotion. For, Christ offers up this sacrifice for our welfare and in our name, puts the effects of this tremendous Sacrifice in our hands, that we may present them to the Divine Majesty.

PART II.

THE SWEET MEANS OF RENDERING US HAPPY IN TIME AND ETERNITY.

A. What are the principal conditions of temporal and eternal welfare?

I. God's blessing, which preseves us from ruin and renders our undertakings prosperous.

II. The possession of His grace and its recovery when once lost.

III. Merciful remission of temporal punishment due for our sins, after they have been forgiven.

B. By the Holy Sacrifice of Mass these considerations are realized.

I. It is the most efficacious sacrifice of petition, by which God will certainly be moved to grant us what we ask of Him. Arguments,

1. A minori ad majus. The sacrifices of the Old Law were often immediately and favorably received. Yet they were only shadows of the light which was to appear. When Abraham was about to sacrifice his son, God said to him: "By My Own Self have I sworn; because * * * thou hast not spared thy only-begotten son for My sake, I will bless thee." Gen. xxii, 16.

2. From the promise of Jesus Christ: "Amen, amen, I say to you: If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you." John xvi, 23. By the Holy Sacrifice of Mass we ask especially in the name of Jesus.

3. Ex natura rei. We offer up to God the dearest and most precious sacrifice. Should He Who rewards the drink of water not grant our petition? Jesus prays for us, and by His merits renders our supplications infinitely meritorious. "You are come to the sprinkling of blood, which speaketh better than Abel." Heb. xii, 24.

Offer then this Holy Sacrifice with confidence, and whatever will be for your spiritual welfare will no doubt be granted to you.

II. It is the most powerful sacrifice of propitiation.

For it confers or augments sanctifying grace.

This truth, so consoling for us sinners, is corroborated:

1. By the nature of this Holy Sacrifice, for it is the unbloody renewal of the bloody sacrifice of the cross. It has, therefore, the same effect: "the remission of sins."

2. By the teaching of the Apostles. "Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many." The same applies to the unbloody sacrifice. "How much more shall the blood of Christ * * * cleanse our conscience from dead works (*i. e.*, sins)?" Heb. ix, 28, 14. "Let us go, therefore, with confidence to the throne of grace; that we may obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid." Heb. iv, 16. As to the manner in which it effects this atonement, the Council of Trent l. c., teaches that God reconciled by its oblation grants the grace of penance. In regard to venial sins, the theologians assert that, as wax melts near the fire, they disappear in the Holy Sacrifice.

III. It is the most valuable sacrifice of satisfaction.

1. We are in need of a sacrifice of satisfaction and atonement, because by the Sacrament of Penance the eternal guilt and punishment of sin are forgiven, but all temporal punishment is not removed, at least not ordinarily. Therefore, either we must do penance voluntarily, or God will compel us to make satisfaction—here or hereafter. How poor our prospects would be, when we consider our lukewarmness!

2. Now, the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, has the power ex opere operato to remit temporal punishment due for our sins, because by this sacrifice "the fruits of the bloody sacrifice of the cross are distributed and received in the most abundant measure." Conc. Trid. Sess. xxii. Yet the measure of the atonement is proportionate to our worthiness and the manner we attend the Holy Sacrifice. How strong a motive to assist frequently and with devotion at this great sacrifice.

2. Its salutary effects extend to the next world, for it offers us the most efficacious means of delivering the souls from the flames of Purgatory. Trid. Sess. xxii, can. 3. Arguments and illustrations taken from the Ordinarium Missæ also from the prayer at the Offertory, and the general and from time-honored usage of saying masses for the dead. How great a consolation is it for us to be enabled to relieve the poor souls, and to know that the same relief will one day be given to us!

*Peroration:* Shall we not, considering its infinite value, be filled with reverence for this Holy Sacrifice? Shall we not endeavor to partake by true zeal and devotion of its unlimited blessings? Shall we not thus strive to repay the infinite charity of the Divine Master, manifested by instituting this tremendous Sacrifice?

P. Martin of Cochem. O. Min. Cap.

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## II.

## THE PRAYER OF THE PHARISEE AND OF THE PUBLICAN.

What we read in to-day's Gospel, Jesus preached in the temple at Jerusalem, on the day of the dedication of the temple. He intended to instruct His hearers and all men how we must pray, in order to have our petitions granted, and for this purpose He described the defective prayer of the Pharisee, and the good prayer of the Publican. Let us examine the prayer of each of them, so as to learn how we should pray.

### PART I.

### PRAYER OF THE PHARISEE.

1. What we should *praise* in him?

*a.* His *going up into the temple* to pray. By doing so he followed the example of Christ, His Apostles, and the Saints. "My house shall be called the house of prayer for all nations." Is. lvi, 7. Exhortation to go to church frequently and regularly.

*b.* His *giving thanks to God.* Jesus also thanked His

Heavenly Father, and the priest says at the Preface: Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro. Dignum et justum est. "In all things give thanks; for this is the will of God." I Thess, v, 18.

*c.* His *not being an extortioner*, unjust, adulterer. For God's commandment runs thus: "Thou shalt not steal." "Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God." I Cor. vi, 9.

*d.* His *fasting*. Christ and the Apostles did the same; so do all faithful Christians. The Church commands it.

*e.* His *giving tithes* of all that he possessed. Abraham had done the same. Gen. xix, 20; Tobias i, 6. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." Mk. xii, 47.

2. What we should abhor in him.

The Pharisee belonged to those "who trusted in themselves as just, and despised others." Lk. xviii, 9. *Spiritual pride* blinded him so much that he did not recognize himself as a sinner, and thus he vitiated his works which were good in themselves. For this reason his prayer was defective. In offering it up, he sinned in different ways:

*a. By passing over his sins in silence.* He does not accuse himself, as if he were quite innocent. "The just is first accuser of himself." Prov. xviii, 17. He clears himself of some few great sins, whilst he does not regard smaller sins. He does not accuse himself of secret faults. "Who can understand sins? from my secret ones cleanse me, O Lord; and from those of others spare thy servant." Ps. xviii, 13. "I am not conscious to myself of anything; yet in this I am not justified." I Cor. iv, 4. "In many things we all fall, and we know not the greater part of our sins." St. Basil.

*b. By detailing his good works*, (1) with the bad intention of justifying himself. "He that judgeth me, is the Lord." I Cor. iv, 4; (2) ascribing them to himself, to his own labor, not to the grace from above; (3) magnifying and overrating them. He himself knows only two exterior good works; (4) clothing his ostentation in the mantle of piety and religion; properly speaking, he does not thank God, but he thanks himself.

*c. By comparing himself to the Publican*, (1) usurping the judgment reserved to God alone. "Wherefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest. For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou doest the same things which thou judgest." Rom. ii, 1. (2) Accusing him before God, like Satan, who is called "the accuser of our brethren." Apoc. xii, 10. (3) Despising him in his haughtiness. "Whilst the wicked man is proud, the poor is set on fire." Ps. ix, 2. "Let every one prove his own work; and so he shall have glory in himself only, and not in another. For every one shall bear his own burden." Gal. vi, 4.

What wonder, then, that he went down to his house not justified? "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." James iv, 6. Such an humble man we behold in the Publican.

## PART II.

### PRAYER OF THE PUBLICAN.

About the prayer of the Publican there is nothing worthy of reproof, but a great deal worthy of praise.

1. Above all, his *deep humility.*

*a.* "The publican standing afar off." Being conscious of his sinfulness, he did not dare to approach the altar, the sanctuary. Contend not for rank or preference before men, but humble yourself. "He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted."

*b.* "He would not so much as lift his eyes toward heaven." He blushed for his sins, and feared God, his just judge. Be you also ashamed on account of your sins; guard your eyes, particularly in church, and fear God.

2. His *repentance.*

*a.* "He struck his breast." Thus he avowed his having deserved the chastisements of the divine justice. He struck his own breast, attributing the guilt to himself, not to others. Strike your breast also, whenever you have sinned, and say with the priest: Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault, I have sinned in thoughts, words, and deeds.

*b.* He said: "O God be merciful to me a sinner." He

addressed God, not himself, like the Pharisee. He did not enumerate his good works, but recognizes himself as a sinner, imploring God's grace and mercy. Do not enumerate your good deeds, but your sins, and frequently say with a contrite heart: O God, be merciful to me a sinner!

No wonder, then, that the publican went down to his house justified. "He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." "When the wicked turneth himself away from his wickedness, * * * he shall surely live and not die." Ezech. xviii, 28.

*Peroration:* Would we might pray in church and out of church, as this publican prayed in the temple at Jerusalem. For, truly, we have just as many reasons to adopt the prayer of the publican, as to abhor the ostentation of the Pharisee. "If the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?" I Pet. iv, 18. "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, work your salvation with fear and trembling." Phil. ii, 12.

M. Koenigsdorfer.

## Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### WARNINGS AGAINST IMMODEST CONVERSATIONS.

The man that was deaf and dumb, when healed, "spoke rightly," thanking and praising with his tongue our divine Saviour, and listening with his ears to His heavenly doctrines. We have enjoyed the use of these senses from the beginning of our life; but, unlike the man whose healing the Gospel records, many make bad use of them, dishonoring God and ruining their own immortal souls. It is especially the demon of impurity to whom a vast number of Christians lend their tongues as soul-killing daggers, and their ears as funnels, to drip their poison into innocent hearts. To them my present warnings are addressed.

PART I.

AN EARNEST WARNING FOR ALL WHO USE IMMODEST LANGUAGE.

Many of those who are in the habit of indulging in obscene conversation, never reflect of how abominable a conduct they are guilty, and how great a damage they inflict upon themselves and upon others. "They know not what they do," without being excusable. Let them reflect on the following considerations:

I. They give evidence of their own degradation, of their being sunk in the mire of lewdness. "How can you speak good things, whereas you are evil? for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Mt. xii, 34. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications." Mt. xv, 19.

1. Lewdness is the vilest of all passions, as man enslaved by its tyranny stands under the absolute dominion of the flesh, degrading himself to the level of a brute, nay, beneath the brute. The slaves of the flesh, being aware of their disgraceful condition, generally try to conceal their bad deeds. * * * "Every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved." John iii, 20.

2. The abyss of degradation consists in parading your shame and ignominy, and in laughingly revealing the meanness of your heart. Instead of being honored you will be despised by every decent man.

II. Obscenities in words are in themselves sins scarcely pardonable.

1. They are generally committed with premeditation, without great temptations, from sheer wantonness; evincing a malignity frequently not found with great sins committed in deed Therefore, Holy Scripture says: "There is also another speech opposite to death. * * * Let not thy mouth be accustomed to indiscreet speech." Eccles. xxiii, 15,.17. Seldom conversion, seldom forgiveness.

2. It is doubly deserving of punishment to abuse your tongue because it is sanctified and consecrated by the Holy Eucharist, and destined to praise and adore the Most High. "Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth; * * * and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed." Eph. iv. 29.

III. Impure words are so many poisonous stabs, as it were, from a two-edged dagger. "The lips of a harlot are like a honey comb dropping, and her throat is smoother than oil. But her end is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword." Prov. v, 3, 4.

1. They corrupt the soul of him who speaks such words, depriving her of all shame, and rendering her indifferent to her vicious and deplorable condition.

2. They poison the soul of the hearers. Obscene words awaken the concupiscence of the flesh, slumbering in every man, encourage the "Angel of Satan." One impure conversation may poison many innocent souls. A fearful pestilence indeed! Those who are corrupted become more demoralized. Reply to the common excuses: I said it only for a joke; I did not mean any harm by it; none but grown or married people have heard it.

IV. Obscene words are something dreadful in consideration of the unlimited extent of their devilish effects.

1. They cause sins which, when once committed, are seldom abandoned. * * No vice is so apt to become man's second nature as lewdness; none debilitates his power of resistance in the same degree.

2. They cause sins which destroy soul and body. Would I could lead those, whose tongue is filled with impurity, to the bed of pain of their victims!

3. They are a source of vices that swell into a torrent of poison for centuries. One seduces two, two seduce ten, may be, till a moral pestilence sweeps over thousands and thousands. Where is the seducer who has courage enough to answer for all this misery? "Woe to that man by whom scandal cometh." Mt. xviii, 7, "I will require His blood (of the seduced) at thy hand." Ezech. iii, 38.

Take all this into consideration and "let no evil speech proceed from your mouth, but that which is good to the edification of faith, that it may afford grace to the hearers." Eph. iv, 29.

PART II.

A WARNING TO THOSE WHO LISTEN TO IMPURE WORDS.

You have heard that obscene words are a deadly poison to the hearers. May you never learn it by sad experience! In order to avoid this,

1. Do not listen to impure conversation. Fly from those whose tongue drips from this filth, as if they were poisonous snakes, or infected with a deadly pestilence. "Fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God" (Eph. ii, 19), can you converse with swine? * * * Say not, that it will do you no harm, as you hear nothing unknown to you. Will it not hurt you to add a fresh dose to the poison already swallowed, though you may find no delight in it? If, however, it is impossible for you to leave,

II. Try your best to close the impure mouth:

1. By serious countenance. "The north wind driveth away rain, as doth a sad countenance a backbiting (and also an impure) tongue." Prov. xxv, 23.

2. By reproving and warning, which will have at least the

effect that the miserable wretch will restrain his tongue for the future, at least in your presence.

3. By denouncing the scandal to your superiors. Woe to them if, through carelessness or human respect, they should be "dumb dogs!" (Is. lvi, 10.) They "communicate with the wicked works." IIJohn 11.

III. Protect yourselves, at all events, against the possible contagion of shameless words:

1. By keeping your mind occupied, and your attention fixed upon good or at least harmless and interesting objects. The unclean spirit seeketh rest in empty and swept houses. Mt. xii, 44. "The unoccupied mind is a suitable sounding-board for the devil's playing."

2. By at once turning your mind from the impure things you have heard. Who by chance has taken poison into his mouth, will escape all harm, by speedily spitting it out and cleansing his palate.

3. By turning your mind to God, remembering His holy presence, knowledge, and sanctity, imploring His divine grace for you and the unhappy sinner, that he may be converted.

*Peroration:* Whoever, in inevitable dangers, acts in the way here described, will "walk upon the asp and the basilisk, and trample under foot the lion and the dragon." Ps. xc, 13. He who despises this warning, will share the final fate of the seducer.

Jais.

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## II.
## ON SLANDER.

"And they bring to Him one that was deaf and dumb, and they besought Him to lay His hand upon him." Mk. vii, 32. Behold the miraculous power of our Saviour! In a moment He heals the deaf and dumb. "Immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed; and he spoke right." His efforts, however, to impose silence upon the multitude in regard to the miraculous event, proved utterly fruitless. "The more He charged them, so much the more a great deal did they

publish it." St. Gregory assigns as the cause the general experience that it is far more difficult to keep silence than to speak. Oh! that the Christians of our days, like this zealous people, would glorify God and publish His wonderful deeds! But instead, they employ their tongues to deprive their fellow-men of their honor and good name. It is against this vice, as infamous as it is common, the vice of slander, that I propose to speak to-day. I say then: Slander is one of the basest and most hateful vices; and, if committed, lays a heavy burden upon your conscience.

PART I.

SLANDER IS ONE OF THE BASEST VICES.

By slander we brand our honor and character with infamy. St. Chrysostom proves this assertion by calling your attention

1. To the person whom you calumniate. He is either your enemy, or your friend, or indifferent to you.

If he be your *enemy*, you are actuated either by hatred or by envy to speak ill of him, which has always and in all countries been considered base and contemptible. Whatever you may say, you have no claim to be trusted. People will think that passion instigated you to use language which you would detest, if you were on good terms with him.

If he be your *friend* (who is secure against a slanderous tongue?), how degrading is your conduct in violating thus the sacred laws of friendship, to flatter your friend in his presence, and to outrage him in his absence? Alas! there are miscreants who, if opportunity were offered, would not spare the name of their own father.

And if he be a man in whom you are not at all concerned, why do you strike him who never offended you?

2. To the *weapons*, which are the weapons of the tongue according to the language of the Holy Ghost. "Their teeth are weapons and arrows. Their tongue a sharp sword." Ps. lvi, 5. Who is the inventor of these weapons? Satan, answers St. Augustine. For, when about to attack our First Parents, he armed himself with the tongue of a serpent. Therefore, the Son of God says of him: "He was a murderer from the beginning,"

a murderer, not with a sword, but with the tongue. Jeremias, the prophet, thought he could not show better the baseness of his enemies than by calling attention to the kind of weapons they made use of. "Come, let us invent devices against Jeremias * * * let us strike him with the *tongue*." Jerem. xviii, 18.

3. To the *time* chosen by the slanderer. The slanderer will not attack you in your presence, or in presence of your friends, who would defend your honor. How enormous is the cowardice of him who attacks you, because you cannot answer! On this secrecy of the slanderer is founded the duty not to listen to him. "He gave to everyone of them commandment concerning his neighbor." Eccles. xvi, 12.

4. In order to apologize for his meanness, the slanderer will entreat his hearers to keep it all secret, thus confessing his own injustice. Can such a man be better described than by the comparison used by the Holy Ghost, when he calls them serpents biting without making noise? "If a serpent bite in silence, he is nothing better that back-biteth secretly." Eccles. x, 11.

5. Who could be surprised at this vice being hated by God and men? The God of charity must detest the vice which is directly opposed to charity. "Detractors, hateful to God." Rom. i, 30. "The detractor is the abomination of men." Prov. xxiv, 9. In truth, who could be more dreaded than a man whose wicked tongue may attack *anyone?* Holy Scripture therefore says: "A man full of tongue is terrible in his city." Eccles. ix, 25. Terrible, indeed, is he by whose tongue the torch of discord is thrown into so many families.

It is a lamentable fact that this vice of slander is found everywhere. The complaint of David in regard to his times may be justly repeated in regard to us and our times: "They are all gone aside, they are become unprofitable together: there is none that doeth good, no not one." What then, asks St. Augustine, is this pestilence which the whole world is contaminated with? Is it impurity? Is it ambition? Is it avarice? No; it is the pestilence of slander. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips."

Ps. xiii, 3. This vice is so common, that you find it even fostered by those who profess to strive after perfection. Let them hear the dreadful words addressed by St. Bernard to the members of his Order. "Alas! my brethren, he says, if it is so, if we are given to the sin of slander, why do we without cause mortify ourselves all day? Quare mortificamur tota die? Could we not find a smoother road to hell? Why did we not choose that broad way leading to death, so as to be transferred from joy to sadness, not from sadness to sadness? If we are determined to go to hell, why not go there by the sins of the flesh, rather than by calumny?"

PART II.

THE BURDEN LAID ON THE CONSCIENCE BY SLANDER.

The sin of injustice has bitterness and grief for its companions. "Behold, he hath been in labor with injustice: he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity." Ps. vii, 15. If I commit an injustice against God only, I have to give him satisfaction only; but if I commit an injustice against man, I have to give satisfaction to both God and man. If you have done injustice to God alone, you can appease Him by sincere repentance. But if you have done injustice to man, you must, besides repenting of your sin, make restitution to man. Now there is no injustice that imposes such strict and arduous obligations as the injustice of slander:

1. Because the slanderer has to make the most *delicate and important restitution.* If you had deprived your brother of his possessions, you would certainly acknowledge your obligation of restoring them to him. But, no earthly good equals man's good name. Would it then not be more than surprising to doubt your obligation of restoring your brother's name?—And honor destroyed by you cannot be re-established but at the sacrifice of your own honor. You are bound to *retract.* This satisfaction will humble and mortify you, no doubt. But this humiliation is the payment of debt you have yourself contracted, and unless you make this payment, there is absolutely no hope of your becoming reconciled to God.

2. Because the slanderer cannot plead his *inability* to make restitution. If you say it is impossible for you to restore certain goods acquired by unjust means, you may tell the truth; the all-knowing God is your judge. The slanderer cannot bring in this plea.

3. We sometimes hear detractors say, they have nothing to answer for because of what they told about their neighbor being true. But who gave them the right to spread the secret faults of their fellow men? * * * Would *you* not feel indignant at being treated in this way?

4. Besides obliging us to restore the good name of him whom we have deprived of it, slander has yet many other dreadful consequences. For instance: A young person, whose former frailty, long ago repented of and forgiven, you have made known, has been driven into despair; or an enterprising business man lost his credit in consequence of your cruel disclosures. Your untimely indiscretion has sown the seeds of discord between this heretofore happy man and his affectionate wife. Your slanderous tongue has destroyed the confidence that heretofore existed between the pastor and his congregation. Is there not sufficient reason for being surprised at the general spread of a vice so fearful in its consequences?

*Peroration:* Far from judging others, let us judge ourselves. Let us learn to keep silent, when by our silence we guard the honor of our fellow-men. Let us learn to speak, when we are obliged to restore to him that of which our vicious tongue has deprived him. The God of Charity, who left to us charity for our inheritance, requires it of us. This resolution is necessary. For, of all sins, by which our salvation is endangered, there is none found more general and frequent than slander. "By this vice the human race is in the greatest peril." St. Gregory. Happy is he who has learned how to restrain his tongue. His lips speaking charity, his heart remains in the possession of divine grace, to enjoy the eternal happiness of the peace-makers, who shall be called the children of God.

Bourdaloue.

## Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### THE LOVE OF GOD.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Lk. x, 27. It is very humiliating for human pride that a precept was necessary to do what our nature urges us to do, viz.: to love God. "The love of God only renders man happy; deprived of it, he is wretched." Lud. Gran. And that you may keep this precept, I will call to your mind the motives why we should practice this first and most necessary virtue.

PART I.

THE LOVE OF GOD RECOMMENDS ITSELF BY ITS NATURE.

I. It is the most sublime virtue:

1. The *most sublime* of the divine and moral virtues. "Now there remain faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." I Cor. xiii, 13. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of the angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge; and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." L. c. V. 1-3.

2. The *fertile mother* of all other virtues and their brightest ornament. Without light and warmth no flowery field; without love no true virtue, only "sounding brass, tinkling cymbal."

3. *All-powerful* in its effects, keeping the heart, so prone to sin, from the depth of spiritual ruin; moving and exciting to, and furnishing the necessary strength for apparently impossible undertakings. It shuts the gates of hell and opens the doors of

heaven, suddenly transforming a hideous monster into an angel, etc.

4. The virtue of the *inhabitants of heaven*, its exercise being the only eternal daily work of the angels and Saints. * * * It is the virtue of God Himself: "God is charity." I John iv, 16. * * In all His works He is actuated by infinite charity.

II. *It confers on us the highest dignity.*

1. By this virtue we are elevated above all creatures of this visible world. They serve God by absolute necessity, but they cannot love Him.

2. By this virtue we are elevated above ourselves. All other virtues remind man of his misery and lowness; faith reminds him of his spiritual blindness; humanity, of his foolish pride; chastity, of the disgrace of sensuality. Charity alone elevates without reminding you of your weakness, rendering the soul, as it were, infinite, as God Himself is infinite. "To love God beyond measure, is the measure of love." St. Bernard.

3. This virtue confers on us a true nobility:

*a.* We obtain the freedom of the children of God.

*b.* We reach by it our perfection, it being "the bond of perfection." Col. iii, 14.

*c.* We enter into the most intimate relation with God, being in a manner deified.

III. *The greatest beauty of our holy religion.*

This is the greatest prerogative of Christianity that it teaches men to love God, by which he is more honored than by the most conspicuous deeds.

IV. *In the love of God we find true happiness.*

1. *In this world.* Divine love (*a*) renders man infinitely rich by the possession of God. "With Me are riches and glory * * * that I may enrich them that love Me, and may fill their treasures." Prov. viii, 18, 21. (*b*) Fills the heart with the sweetest delights. "O how great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee." Ps. xxx, 20. (*c*) Causes heavenly peace, which cannot be dis-

turbed either by tribulations or by the sting of the passions. "If any one love Me * * * He will come to him, and will make an abode with him." John xiv, 23. Hence humble, but firm, confidence. "Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom. viii, 35. (*d*) Sweetens what is most bitter, all sufferings, and especially death. "Either suffer or die." St. Therese.

2. *For eternity.* Divine charity is the pledge of life everlasting. "He that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him." I John, iv, 16. In proportion to our measure of charity will be the measure of our eternal glory and joy, which is simply immeasurable. "The eye hath not seen * * * what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." I Cor. ii, 9.

Should we yet hesitate one moment to devote our whole heart to God? If it were possible, we should be moved to love God by reflecting:

PART II.

HOW MUCH GOD DESERVES OUR LOVE.

I. *He is the most perfect being.*

We admire and love persons for their natural and supernatural qualities, though we may not profit by them. And should we not love God with a love free from all selfishness?

1. Our heart is by nature attached to the Eternal Beauty that created all things as a reflection of the splendor of him "on Whom the angels desire to look." I Pet. i, 12.

2. We love virtue in all rational creatures. * * Infinitely more should we love God, the substantial Holiness.

3. We feel ourselves attracted by earthly things. Should, then, God's infinite, yet not terrific, majesty not captivate our heart? * * * O that you would open the eyes of your soul to meditate on God, as He is in Himself, often and fervently: and you could not but love Him, even if you were never to possess Him.

II. *He is our greatest benefactor.*

1. Before He created us. Before God laid the foundation

of the universe,we were the object of His love and care. * * * For us He created the heavenly lights, the earth with its beauty, joys, and treasures. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Jerem. xxxi, 3.

2. When He created us. Reflect on the dignity of human nature in regard to body and soul, and man's elevated rank above the visible world. "Thou hast made him a little less than the Angels, Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, and hast set him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast subjected all things under his feet." Ps. viii, 6-8.

3. During our whole lifetime. Who could detail the natural benefits heaped upon us, not to mention the supernatural benefits? The Gentiles were so far misled as to worship the divine blessings and benefits, so bright do they appear. * * * But if nothing else could move us to love God, we cannot help loving Him on account of His infinite mercy.

III. *He is infinitely merciful.*

1. He was moved with mercy to redeem us through his only-begotten Son. "Who cannot love God, let him attentively look at a crucifix, for love is kindled by nothing more than by love." Lud. Gran. Every wound inflicted on Jesus solicits your love.

2. It is mercy that induces Him to work our salvation by the Holy Ghost in the Catholic Church. Sacraments, indulgences, the Word of God, etc.

3. His mercy moves Him to reward for all eternity our virtuous acts, after having made them meritorious by the blood of Jesus Christ.

*Peroration:* The motives forcing us to love God are so striking and numerous that the Apostle pronounces anathema against him who refuses to love God in return. His abode should be amongst the beasts of the wilderness, if even they did not cast him out. * * A fervent prayer to God to increase the Divine love in the hearts of both the preacher and the hearers.

Eberhard.

## II.

## FRATERNAL CHARITY MOST ACCEPTABLE TO GOD AND MOST BENEFICIAL TO OURSELVES.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Lk. x, 27. If our heart, to fulfil this command, needs a motive to be actuated by, it finds it certainly in these words: "God so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son." John iii, 16. What wonderful love! And, at the same time, what a moving exhortation to practice charity! "My dearest, if God hath so loved us, we ought also to love one another." I John iv, 11. This charity manifests itself principally by an active sympathy with those who are in distress. In order to urge upon you the continual exercise of this sincere and genuine charity, I proceed to explain to you, how acceptable in the eyes of God are works of Christian charity, and how great the advantages which we will derive from them.

### PART I.

### HOW ACCEPTABLE IN THE EYES OF GOD ARE WORKS OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

We infer this:

1. From the urgency with which this commandment is enjoined upon us by Jesus Christ.

*a.* He places it on a par with the love of God. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God * * * This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is *like* to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Mt. xxii, 37–39. A word of immense import!

*b.* He urges it as being emphatically His own. "This is *My* commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you." John xv, 12. In order to convince us that He lays much stress upon this precept, He has made known its observance to be His heart's desire, and has, moreover, as a powerful incentive for our charity, appealed to the many benefits He has bestowed upon mankind.

*c.* He states most anxiously the true meaning of this commandment, a precaution usually observed with matters of the

greatest importance. "I give you a new commandment! That you love one another, as I have loved you." John xiii, 34. This alludes to the defective charity as exercised by Jews and heathens, in contrast with which He calls His a new commandment.

*d.* He appoints its observance to be the *condition* of His discipleship and the distinguishing mark whereby His followers are to be known from the rest of mankind: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples: if you have love one for another." John xiii, 35. All other acts of virtue, therefore, will avail us nothing if Christian charity does not reside with us. "The greatest of these is charity." I Cor. xiii, 13. Cf. xiii, 1 ff. The early Christians practiced this virtue, so characteristic of a disciple of Jesus Christ, to such an extent, that with admiration the heathens used to say: "Lo! how they have love one for another."

2. From man's relation to God, he being His image and likeness. "And God created man to His own image: to the image of God He created him." Gen. 1, 27.

*a.* The essence of Christian brotherly love consists in loving our neighbor for God's sake; not only from reverence for the divine commandment, but from sacred reverence and love for God's own nature, as being truly reflected in man as His image and likeness.

*b.* Consequently, God Himself is glorified by our condescending to the wants and needs of our fellow-man. "Religion pure and unspotted with God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation." James i, 27. "He that doeth mercy, offereth sacrifice." Eccles. xxxv, 4.

3. From God's view of charitable works.

*a.* He does not consider them as a favor bestowed upon a being, degraded, perhaps, and suffering the consequences of its own fault, and ungrateful, or even abusing our kindness.

*b.* But He considers them as if done to Himself. "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me * * * You gave Me to eat * * you gave Me to drink," etc. Mt. xxv, 35, 40. St. Elizabeth of Hungary laid a leper in her husband's bed. The anger of the

landgrave was appeased by beholding the crucified Redeemer in his stead. St. Martin beholds Jesus Christ covered with the half of his mantle which he had given to a beggar on the wayside. Has God more convincing arguments of His appreciation of charitable works at His disposal? What a moving and touching appeal to our charity! What happiness in your being able to relieve the sorrows of God's image and likeness! Is there a sacrifice too great for you?

PART II.

THE VALUE OF CHARITABLE WORKS FOR OUR OWN TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL WELFARE.

The rewards or effects of fraternal charity are, as follows:

1. An abundance of divine blessing, by which God restores a hundred fold what, from love toward Him, we give to His poor children.

*a.* Holy Scripture guarantees it by many promises and examples, which appear as the accomplishment of the promises. "He that hath mercy on the poor, lendeth to the Lord: and He will repay him." Prov. xix, 19. "Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure and pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall they give into your bosom. For, with the same measure that you shall measure, it shall be measured to you again." Lk. vi, 38. How sincerely God keeps His promise, you see from the history of Tobias and the widow of Sarepte, whose example teaches you besides, that if with a cheerful heart you give of the little you have in your possession, God will more than double it.

*b.* Daily experience proves it. You have certainly never heard of any one impoverished by giving alms. How easy would it be to show that Christian charity has been to many the source of prosperity, sometimes to a wonderful extent, though, as a general rule, the finger of God does not show itself so strikingly, yet perceptibly by many unexpectedly happy events.

2. Divine *mercy*, which opens its treasures principally to the merciful. These treasures are:

*a.* Remission of *sins*. "Wherefore, O King, let my council be acceptable to thee; and redeem thou thy sins with alms,

and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor." Dan. iv, 24. "Before all things have a mutual charity among yourselves: for charity covereth a multitude of sins." I Pet. iv, 8.

*b.* Rémission of *temporal punishment.* For charitable works are the most acceptable satisfaction within the reach of man. "Go then and learn what this meaneth: I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Mt. ix, 13.

*c.* The grace of *conversion.* "When thou shalt pour out thy soul to the hungry, and shalt satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise up in darkness * * And the Lord will give thee rest continually, and will fill thy soul with brightness * * and thou shalt be like a watered garden." Is. lviii, 10–12.

*d.* The grace of *final perseverance.* "He that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him." I John iv, 16. "Above all these things have charity, which is the *bond of perfection.*" Col. iii, 14. "Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day." Ps. xl, 1. "That which remaineth, give alms, and behold, all things are clean unto you." Lk. xi, 41.

3. An exceedingly great *reward in eternity.* Judging from the description given of the Last Judgment (Mt. xxv, 34 ff.,) one might be inclined to suppose the Lord's coming would be exclusively for the sake of the merciful, whom He is represented as there particularly addressing. How great will be the delight in hearing such words addressed to you! How great will be the joy and glory which are to succeed those merciful words, when the Blessed of the Father shall hear these other words: "Come, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

*Peroration:* Are there yet more considerations necessary to render fraternal charity your holiest and dearest duty? Never be deterred from giving alms by timid calculations. "Alms is a seed. Omitting work of charity in hard times would be as foolish as not to sow after a barren year." St. Cyprian. "It is very difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Lk. xviii, 25. "Make to yourself friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." Lk. xvi, 9. P. Beckx.

## Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### INGRATITUDE TOWARDS GOD.

If, out of ten men who receive the abundance of divine blessing, only one would return thanks to the Lord, how many just men would there be on earth! But, alas! it is the sad fact, that out of hundreds there is hardly "one found to return, and give glory to God." Lk. xvii, 18. Nay, in ingratitude we surpass the ten lepers, not contenting ourselves with going our way merely, but even affronting the Divine Benefactor by abusing his benefits. Let us at once, whilst there is time, forsake this terrible vice of ingratitude, lest the judgment of the Lord overtake us, when repentance would be too late. For this purpose let me call your attention to the following considerations:

I. The ignominy of ingratitude.

II. Its dreadful consequences.

#### PART I.

#### THE IGNOMINY OF INGRATITUDE.

I. The ungrateful Christian acts against the voice of his conscience, which is disgraceful.

1. Natural reason acknowledges the duty of gratitude. Every one expects those whom he benefited, to be thankful to him, although selfishness should have prompt d him to confer his benefits. * * * God has the first and principal claim to our gratitude; not only because He is Himself our greatest benefactor, but, also, because He enables and induces others to distribute their benefits.

2. The general consent of mankind brands with infamy the ungrateful. "The earth holds nothing worse than an ungrateful man." "To return no thanks for benefits, is disgraceful, and is considered ignominious by all men." Seneca. What seemed contemptible to the heathens, must be contemptible indeed.

II. Ingratitude sinks the human being below the level of the brute creation.

How great is the attachment of domestic animals to their benefactors. How well they know him who feeds them, and how sensibly they show their gratitude to him. The wild beast in the cage caresses the hand of the keeper. How humiliating for us is the complaint of our Lord! "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth! * * I have brought up children and exalted them; but they have despised me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel hath not known Me, and My people hath not understood." Is. i, 2, 3.

III. Ingratitude is infinitely ignominious, because directed against God.

1. God exhorts us so often to be grateful. "Sing in grace in your hearts to God. All whatsoever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." Col. iii, 17, 18. "Be instant in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving." Col. iv, 2. "In all things give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all." I Thess. v, 18.

2. His beneficence is unlimited, which the Apostle expresses in these few words: "In Him we live, and move, and are." Act. xvii, 28.

3. All His benefits are gratuitous. "Who hath first given to him, and recompense shall be made him?" Rom. xi, 35. Does He need our work to complete His infinite happiness? Are we ever able to recompense Him, according to His benefits?

4. The ungrateful man denies, in fact, the existence of God. Though he may say with his tongue: "I believe in God, the creator of heaven and earth, preserver of all things," etc., yet his ingratitude proves that he does not attribute his prosperous condition, health, wealth, etc., to Divine Providence, but to his own merit. How unwise, and how dishonoring to God!

How well founded, then, appear the many woes pronounced by God against ungrateful Israel, and thereby, against ungrateful Christians.

PART II.

THE PERNICIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF INGRATITUDE.

"Is this the return thou makest to the Lord, O foolish and senseless people?" Deut. xxxii, 6. Foolish, indeed, and senseless is the ungrateful man, when we consider the consequences of this black vice.

I. Temporal consequences:

1. God threatens to deprive the ungrateful of the blessings received. "From him that hath not (a grateful heart!) even that which he hath shall be taken." Lk. ix, 26. God has ever been the absolute owner of whatever He gives; and He gives and takes according to His good pleasure.

*a.* He threatens so to direct events that His gift shall become a curse, instead of a blessing to the ungrateful receiver. It is but just that the Prodigal Son should be punished by the very crimes by which he had afflicted his father. *b.* To refuse whatever he may ask for in future. *c.* To send chastisements upon him so as to convince him that He is the Lord.

2. God fulfilled His threatenings (*a*) on our First Parents. How happy once in God! Afterwards, how ungrateful; and, then, how unhappy! (*b.*) On Israel. In punishment of their ungrateful complaining in the desert, God sent the quails, according to their desire, through the immoderate eating of which a terrible mortality was effected. (*c.*) On King Nabuchodonosor. In his pride he congratulated himself on his glory and magnificence, giving no thanks to God, whereupon he was dethroned, and led the life of an animal for seventeen years. Dan. iv. (*d*) Your own life and the life of your acquaintances will bear similar testimony.

II. Everlasting consequences:

If the sinner remain ungrateful to the end of his earthly life, he will be deprived ot all divine gifts for all eternity. He will be deprived

1. Of the word of God, instead of which he will incessantly hear only the words of Satan.

2. Of the celestial light against which he closed his eyes; in punishment of which he will be buried in everlasting darkness.

3. Of the beatific vision, instead of which he will behold only the vision of devilish deformity.

4. Of the sacramental means of salvation, which would have instantaneously rendered him worthy of heaven but of which henceforth he will be forever deprived.

5. Of heavenly peace and joy, which will be lost forever, because while on earth, he lived in discord with God, and sought his joys in sin and profanation of the name of the Most High.

*Peroration:* Such is the ignominy, such are the consequences, of ingratitude! Shall we, by indulging so disgraceful a vice prepare such a fate for ourselves? Never forget that gratitude honors you, and is a constantly repeated petition for new blessings.

Horar.

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## II.

## THE SIN OF IMPURITY.

How great was the benefit bestowed by the word of Jesus on the ten lepers, when they found themselves cleansed of a disease, which not only dreadfully deforms the human being, but also throws the whole body into a state which renders the sick person the object of horror! But what was that compared with the benefit bestowed on those who, by the same almighty word, are either secured against, or brought back from, the more hideous and destructive leprosy of impurity? And because this dire pestilence rages more frequently and produces more horrible consequences, than the merely physical disease, I am determined, though reluctantly, to invite your attention for a few moments, to the hatefulness of the sin of impurity.

### PART I.

### BY ITS INNER NATURE.

True, the Apostle says: "All uncleanness let it not be so much as named among you, as it becometh saints." Eph. v. 3.

Be it then far from me to mention things that might offend chaste ears. But, admonished by the prevalence of this fearful vice, the responsibilities of my office require me to warn you against this most deadly infection—this infamous disease—of impurity:

This sin, however loathsome in the sight of God and of human nature transformed by His grace, is nevertheless most seductive to the lower, fallen, nature of man. As a check to it, God has implanted in us the noble *sense of shame*, so that the Christian who has not returned, like a dog to his vomit, abhors whatever is unchaste:

*a. Thoughts.* How alarming to baptismal innocence is every impure thought, every rising desire! Hence the many timid accusations, although the consent was not given. How deeply ashamed we should be, if our fellow-men could perceive our impure thoughts and desires, though they be involuntary! Happy is he who, when merely thoughts cross his mind, listens to the warning voice of nature. He will be guarded against a more lamentable fall.

*b. Words.* St. Stanislaus fainted at hearing, by chance, an expression of ambiguous meaning. *Even* ordinary virtue will blush in confusion at the gibes of immodesty; only habitual shamelessness will laugh at them.

*c. Deeds.* Is not the whole nature set in an uproar? Must men not use violence to break through the barrier of pudicity? Who is so base as to commit impure actions before witnesses? Yet, when you are alone, the all-knowing God, and the holy angels, witness your deeds. Yea, one ought to be ashamed in presence of any even of the lower order of God's creatures: "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the timber that is between the joints of the building shall answer." Habac. ii, 11.

2. It is repugnant to the higher nature of man. Man—the image and likeness of the Triune God—by his impurity reviles

*a.* God the Father, who created our limbs in honor; and at last "them who have slept through Jesus, God will bring with him" to everlasting glorification. I Thess. iv, 13.

*b.* God the Son. "Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" I Cor. vi, 15. How awful the outrage of addicting the body taken by Jesus Christ in his Incarnation, made by baptism the member of Jesus Christ, partaking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ by Holy Eucharist,—to impurity!

*c.* God the Holy Ghost. "Know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" I Cor. vi, 19. Cf. I Thess. iv, 7, 8. No church ever received such a sublime and solemn consecration as the body of a Christian by the Sacraments of everlasting consecration. "But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are." I Cor. iii, 17.

3. It is an abomination before God. It will help us to imagine how great an abomination if we reflect

*a.* On the history of creation. God implanted pudicity in our original nature. When, in consequence of sin, the sensual desires arose in our first parents, God gave them garments to cover themselves with.

*b.* On the sixth and ninth commandments of the decalogue, and on the many warnings and threatenings in the New Testament in reference to impurity.

*c.* On the punishments inflicted by God for this vice, on whole societies as well as on individuals. Before the deluge, God declared: "My spirit shall not remain in man for ever, because he is flesh." Gen. vi, 3. The punishment inflicted on Sodom, Onan, etc. Still are the unchaste visited with similar, and even greater, punishment. It may be well, consequently, to devote a few moments to the consideration of the *consequences* of this awful sin.

## PART II.

## ITS CONSEQUENCES.

These are:

1. *Ruin of earthly happiness.* Man given to lewdness expects pleasure from his sin. But he will soon be compelled to confess: "I am become miserable, and am bowed down even to

the end: I walked sorrowfully all the day long. For my loins are filled with illusions; and there is no health in my flesh. I am afflicted and humbled exceedingly." Ps. xxxvii, 7–9. Cf. Prov. v, 1–5. Lewdness works destruction

*a.* On the *body.* "The ugliest vice is lust, as it not only sullies but also debilitates the soul." Card. Hugo. It is attended by bodily weakness; by hideous marks in the face, shy looks, death-color; by melancholy caused by the stings of conscience, not unseldom turning to insanity; by dreadful diseases and an untimely death. Plutarch has it recorded that in the temple of Venus there was the market for the things requisite for a funeral. Dreadful significance! Vide Eccles. xix, 3; Prov. v, 8.

*b.* On *temporal welfare.* There is little experience required to know that, by lust, fortune is squandered, matrimonial happiness destroyed, misery and ignominy brought upon families, hope of temporal prosperity often cut off. Samson and the prodigal son may serve as examples.

2. *Ruin of the soul.* "Lust is the greatest of sins, not in itself, but in its consequences." Alcuin. These effects are, according to St. Thomas Aquinas.

*a.* The *reasoning faculty* is weakened. "Fornication and wine and drunkenness take away the understanding." Osee. iv, 11. Solomon, the wise king, by his love of women turned an idolater. "Wine and women make wise men fall off." Eccles. xix, 2.

*b.* The *will* becomes perverted. God, from hatred of uncleanness, withdraws from the sinner his grace more and more; and thus, habit occasion and temptation co-operating, he sinks deeper and deeper into sin: Impurity, being a capital sin, generates many other sins, as scandals, seductions, perjuries, infantanicide, etc. David, a man according to God's heart, in consequence of adultery becomes a murderer. The impure sinner fears neither God nor His Saints. Sacrilegious confessions.

*c.* *Conversion* becomes almost an *impossibility.*

Like Augustine before his conversion, many impure Christians ask for their conversion, but with the secret wish not to be

heard. This vice soon becomes a second nature. "A young man according to his way, even when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. xxii, 6.

3. *Eternal damnation.*

*a.* Reflect on the *loss* of everlasting joys, where nothing defiled can enter. Think of the choirs of innocent children, virgins, chaste men, women, widows, think that you are never to partake of their jubilant canticles, all this on account of so miserable, nay tormenting pleasure of sin!

*c.* Reflect on the *torments* of hell. Sodom and Gomorrha are set for a warning example. The unchaste are threatened with "their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone." Apoc. xxi, 8. "As much as she hath glorified herself, and hath been in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give unto her." xviii, 7.

*Peroration:* Take a warning, before it be too late. Never walk this path, or if you ever did, cry out like the lepers: "Jesus, Master, have mercy." Then show yourself to the priest, and return, not to sin, but to Jesus by grateful conversion.

Le Jeune.

## Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### THE CRIME OF AVARICE.

"You cannot serve God and mammon." Mt. i, 24. Every day bears testimony to the truth of these words proceeding from the mouth of the Incarnate God. Whoever serves mammon, attaching his heart to perishable things, forgets God, and becomes the slave of a passion, which leads to eternal ruin. "Gold and silver hath destroyed many." Eccles. viii, 3. Therefore, suffer not yourselves to become the slaves of mammon. Be on your guard against the vice of avarice. In order to do my part in warning you against this base vice, I will show you:

I. The reason why you should guard against it.

II. The manner in which you should guard against it.

#### PART I.

#### THE MOTIVES.

You should carefully avoid the vice of avarice, because:

I. The avaricious man usually leads a miserable life, making no use of his wealth.

1. Daily experience proves this assertion. How often is it the case that the rich money-lover deprives himself of the necessary food, and contents himself with beggarly clothing, etc!

2. Holy Scripture teaches it. "A covetous man shall not be satisfied with money; and he that loveth riches shall reap no fruit from them." Eccle. v. 9. "There is also another evil, which I have seen under the sun, and that frequent among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, and substance, and honor, and his soul wanteth nothing of all that he desireth, yet God doth not give him power to eat thereof, but a stranger shall eat it up." L. c. vi, 1, 2.

3. The testimony of the Holy Fathers is to the same effect. "Many possess riches, without taking the heart to make use of them, and when necessity sometimes forces them to it, they ap-

pear as if they were forced to sin." St. Chrysostom. "The avaricious resemble oxen that pull the sheaves into the barn, themselves being fed on straw." St. Augustine.

II. Avarice takes away a man's peace of mind.

"What the moth is to the clothing, avarice is to the human heart." St. Ephrem.

1. The avaricious man is in constant disquietude:

*a.* Through terror of losing his possessions. How great is his anxiety in time of war, conflagration. How tormenting in times of peace, his fear of robbers and of the sons of violence! "Sleep is sweet to a laboring man, whether he eat little or much; but the fullness of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." Eccle. v, 11.

*b.* Through envy of others, and the craving to possess their property. "He that is a slave to avarice, despises what is his own, longing for what belongs to others, which it he can not obtain, he passes the night without rest." St. Gregory.

*c.* Through desire to accumulate more wealth. The avaricious man is like one afflicted with dropsy, who is ever drinking, and yet is ever tormented with thirst. "The eye of the covetous man is insatiable in his portion of iniquity: he will not be satisfied till he consume his own soul, drying it up." Eccles. xiv, 9. St. Augustine compares the covetous sinner with hell, which, however many it may have swallowed, never says: "It is enough." Likewise the covetous man is never satisfied, however much of riches may have flowed into his lap.

2. The avaricious man is inconsolable at the loss of his riches. Whilst the servant of God, in time of disaster, confidently lifts up his eyes to his Heavenly Father, saying with Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!", the servant of mammon detests his fate. And how great will be his grief in the hour of death, when he has to part with his wealth so endeared to him! With Agag he will exclaim: "Thus bitter death separates!" "O Death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that hath peace in his possession." Eccles. xli, 1.

III. Avarice is a base vice, and is the source of many other vices.

1. It is a base vice. "Nothing is more wicked than the covetous man. * * * There is not a more wicked thing than to love money, for such a one setteth even his own soul to sale." Eccles. x, 9, 10. "Covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you." Eph. v, 3. "Nothing breathes forth a more pestiferous stench than the ulcer of avarice." St. Pet. Dam.

2. It is the source of many other vices. "Covetousness is the root of all evils." I Tim. vi, 10. "The covetous man is ungrateful to God, morose to his neighbor, and cruel to himself." St. Innoc.

IV. Avarice almost inevitably leads to eternal ruin. This is manifest:

1. From the nature of things. The covetous man can hardly be converted, for (*a*) his faculty of reasoning is blindfolded, so that he is not aware of the lamentable condition of his soul. "The wandering of concupiscence overturneth the innocent mind." Wisd. iv, 12. (*b*) The heart of the miser is hardened; nothing makes on him a lasting impression. Success nourishes his concupiscence; distress throws him into desperation. Exhortations at the side of his death-bed are fruitless.

2. From Holy Writ. "Where are they * * * that hoarded up silver and gold, wherein men trust? * * * They are cut off, and have gone down to hell." Baruch iii, 17-19. "Amen, I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. * * * It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Mt. xiv, 23, 24. "The covetous shall not possess the kingdom of heaven." I Cor. vi, 10; Cf. James v, 1-7.

3. From the writings of Holy Fathers. "Greediness for money fills hell with condemned." St. Basil. "The covetous burns here with concupiscence, hereafter he will burn in hell." St. Gregory. Take a lesson from Judas.

PART II.

THE MEANS YOU SHOULD ADOPT IN ORDER TO AVOID THE VICE OF AVARICE.

I. Endeavor to know yourself, your inclinations, passions, desires; and examine yourself in order to ascertain whether you can not find some symptom of avarice within yourself. Such symptoms are:

1. A greater confidence in temporal goods than in Almighty God. "Behold the man that made not God his helper, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and prevailed in his vanity." Ps. li, 9. How foolish this is, you learn from the parable of the rich man. Lk. xii, 16. "Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to hope in uncertain riches, but in the living God." I Tim. vi, 17.

2. Unscrupulousness in the manner of acquiring temporal goods. It is allowed to acquire temporal goods by just means. But the end does not justify the means. Usury, for instance, is abhorred by Almighty God. "He that giveth upon usury, and that taketh an increase, shall such a one live? He shall not live. * * * He shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him." Ezech. xviii, 13. "Thou shalt not lend to thy brother money to usury, nor corn, nor any other thing." Deut. xxiii, 19.

3. Excessive grief at the loss of temporal goods. We are not prohibited from expressing our grief on occasions of temporal calamity, but to lament excessively, and not to be willing to yield to Divine Providence, are marks of avarice.

4. If you do not use temporal goods for the glory of God, nor for your own and your neighbor's needs. If you should discover one or the other of the above characteristics, endeavor to eradicate them.

II. Strive to keep from your soul the vice of avarice:

1. By continual struggle against the concupiscence of money and riches. "Trust not in iniquity, and covet not robberies; if riches abound, set not your heart upon them." Ps. lxi, 11.

2. By the exercise of opposite virtues, especially that of

Christian charity. You will experience the joys earned by these virtues. "Acceptable is the man that sheweth mercy and lendeth; he shall * * * not be moved for ever." Ps. cxi, 5, 6. "The blessing of Him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I comforted the heart of the widow." Job xxix, 13.

3. By supplication for removal of the temptation. "Lead us not into temptation." This prayer is especially necessary for those who are blessed with earthly goods, that they may not be blinded by the glitter of gold. If Judas had prayed, he would have escaped his fall.

*Peroration:* "Take heed and beware of all covetousness." Lk. xii, 15. Let these words of the Lord be ever in our memories, and let us endeavor to live accordingly.

Chevassu.

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## II.

## SECURE YOUR SALVATION.

"Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." Mt. vi, 33. How many are there who do not mind this exhortation of the Lord! Grovelling in the dust of the earth, solicitous for earthly pursuits, they forget heaven and what leads to heaven. How miserable a condition for a Christian to be in, whose religion teaches him that our bodies and all temporal goods exist only for the sake of our immortal souls! It will be my endeavor, this morning, to guard you against this carelessness in regard to your soul, and your soul's salvation.

### PART I.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY "CARE OF OUR SOUL?"

It will help us to answer this question more satisfactorily, if I first explain to you,

I. What is too often mistaken for care of the soul, but, in reality, is not such:

1. Religious exercises by *mere* habit, such as lip-prayer,

frequent attendance at divine service, etc., solely because others do the same. "Leaving the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, the washing of pots and of cups, and many other things you do like to these." Mk. vii, 8.

2. Hypocritical piety; for the purpose of being praised by others, as giving alms from desire for glory. "When thou doest an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward. When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee." Mt. vi, 2, 3.

3. Sinister, or even wicked, intentions. If you say certain prayers regularly in the hope that for the sake of them God will overlook a habitual sin which you have not the courage to forsake; or if you intend to give hereby satisfaction for being in unjust possession of your neighbor's goods. "A man that fasteth for his sins, and doeth the same again, what doth his humbling himself profit him? who will hear his prayer?" Eccles. xxxiv, 31.

II. But what is it to have a real and proper care of our soul? It is

1. To forsake sin by frequent examination of conscience, acts of contrition, firm resolutions, and a contrite, sincere, and complete confession.

2. Watching continually that you may not relapse into your past sins. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith; do manfully, and be strengthened." I Cor. xvi, 13. For this purpose often call to mind:

*a.* The turpitude of sin. The wretched worm of the earth revolts against the Almighty, the child against its father. "The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil things, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." Ps. xxxiii, 17. "Let us shun sin, which is worse than the devil." St. Chrysostom.

*b.* The calamity brought upon you by sin. "The wages of sin, is death." Rom. vi, 23.

*c.* The power and malice of the enemies who threaten us with our destruction, viz.: the world, our flesh, and Satan, who "as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour." I Pet. v, 8.

*d.* Our own frailty in the combat against our adversaries. "Watch ye, and pray, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh weak." Mt. xxvi, 41. "Wherefore let him that thinketh himself to stand take heed lest he fall." I Cor. x, 12.

3. When progressing on the path of virtue, the care of your soul consists:

*a.* In uprooting entirely the remainder of your faults. "Let no sin reign in your immortal body." Rom. vi, 12.

*b.* In making reparation for wrong done, as Zaccheus did. Lk. xix, 8.

*c.* In performing good works, either alone or with others. "Brethren, labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your vocation and election." II Pet. i, 10.

## PART II.

### HOW NECESSARY AND IMPORTANT THE CARE OF OUR SOUL!

The care of our soul is infinitely important and absolutely necessary, as is manifest

I. From the fact that all earthly things are vain and transient.

1. All earthly goods—health, honor, wealth, etc.—never content the human heart, and disappear like the smoke in the air. "I have seen all things that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccle. i, 14.

2. Unexpectedly death will approach us, as it has approached all our ancestors. "It is appointed for men once to die, and after this the judgment." Heb. ix, 27. "At what hour you know not, the Son of Man will come." Mt. xxiv, 44.

3. We leave all earthly things behind, the king taking no

more along with him into eternity than the beggar. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." Job i, 21.

II. From man's destiny.

1. Man is God's image and likeness, redeemed by Christ, Lord of the earth, endowed with an immortal soul.

2. The body has been given us to be the residence of our soul: the other goods for the preservation of our body, and as occasions to do good.

3. The earth is destined for our temporal pilgrimage, as preparation for eternity. "Here we have no permanent city, but we seek one to come." Heb. xiii, 14.

III. From the glory awaiting us in the next world.

1. There will be no sadness, no envy, no strife, no hatred. "There they will not envy one another their divers degrees of glory, because amongst us the unity of charity will reign." St. Augustine.

2. There we are to receive an everlasting, ineffable reward. "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in heaven." Mt. v, 12. "Considering what we are promised in heaven, we deem contemptible whatever we possess on earth." St. Gregory.

3. There our reward will be greater in proportion to the greater care we may have taken of our soul. "In My Father's house there are many mansions." John xiv, 2.

*Peroration:* Let us often and earnestly meditate on the end for which the Most High imparted to us this temporal life. "If we neglect our soul, we shall not make our body happy either. For the soul is not made for the body, but the body is made for the soul. Who, therefore, neglects what is the superior part, and exalts what is the inferior part, he ruins both." St. Chrysostom.

Muehling.

## Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.
### A MOTHER'S GRIEF AND JOY.

Our benign Saviour seeing the grief-stricken widow and mother, had compassion on her, and changed her grief into joy. The people also had compassion on her; and after the widow's son had been raised to life, they glorified God. This mother in the Gospel brings to our mind the great mother St. Monica, on whose festival day the Church reads the same gospel and our own mother, the Catholic Church, who grieves and weeps over the spiritual death of so many of her children. Let these three mothers, in their grief, be the subject of our meditation.

PART I.

THE MOTHER AT NAIM.

I. Her grief! Who could fathom it? A widow for a long time, she is now bereft of her last joy and only hope. When you witness similar scenes so frequent in the human family, what effect should it produce in you?

1. *Acknowledge the vanity of the world.* Man is so prone to put his trust in his youth. Death does not spare youth; nor does it spare crowns, honors and treasures. Strive after everlasting goods!

2. *Repine not.* No repining is of any avail, death being inexorable. Instead of alleviating, it will increase your grief. Besides, it is an offence against the Divine Majesty, since God's justice, wisdom and bounty assign to Death its prey.

3. *Be not discouraged.* God lives. He will and can provide for all, for you amongst the rest. Besides, of all evils, death is not the greatest. The only true evil is sin; which endeavor to escape.

4. Show *compassion* on your neighbor, when in distress; as Jesus and the people of Naim did. Let it be manifested by consolation, prayer, help.

II. Her *joy* at embracing her son once more! Who could describe it? Though Jesus dwells no longer visibly in our midst to work such miracles of consolation, His consolation is not taken away from us, but we all may partake of it.

1. Every Christian, in every condition of life, if he be pious, and leave everything to God, knows that all things turn out to be a boon for him. Whether we live or die, we belong to Christ. To die is gain for us.

2. Parents, at the death of their children, find their consolation in religion, and even their joy, knowing that God took the little ones to Himself, removing them from all danger, and imparting to them celestial joys. Vide Wisd. iv, 7–17. "My father and my mother have left me, but the Lord hath taken me up." Ps. xvvi, 10.

3. At the death of our fellow-men generally we are consoled by faith; which points out to us immortality and the resurrection. Vide I Thess. iv, 12.

PART II.

ST. MONICA.

She was the mother of St. Augustine, which sufficiently indicates why the Church has the gospel on the youth at Naim read on her day of honor.

I. Her *grief* was deeper than that of the mother at Naim, as she had to bemoan the loss of a son who, unless God call him to life by the grace of conversion was dead *eternally*. "She has many years bewailed me." St. Augustine.

1. Her maternal solicitude in educating her child, and her excessive grief at the many and habitual vices of her son. Her tears, prayers, and efforts. St. Ambrose consoled her, saying: "Mother, a son of so many tears cannot be lost forever."

2. Application. How deep is the grief which backsliding children occasion their parents! One may console them for the temporal death of their children; but what consolation can be offered them when the souls of those beloved children are dead in sin. "I would rather see you dead than in mortal sin," said Blanca, the mother of St. Louis, to her son. Children, be mind-

ful of the words of the Holy Ghost: "The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children: but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation." Eccles. iii. 11. Parents, build yours and your children's happiness more on virtue, by teaching and example, than on wealth: and if your efforts be frustrated, weep for them, warn and punish them; but above all, pray like Monica that through His grace the Lord may guide the hearts of your children, and rejoice your own heart.

II. Her joy.

1. She lived to see her son converted and forsaking the world. She saw him standing at the altar, and commended herself to the love of God in the Holy Sacrifice offered up by him. His elevation to the ranks of the Apostles, his brilliant piety and eloquence she witnessed from the height of heaven, where she saw him again, after this short temporal life, never to be separated from Him.

2. Application. O that all erring children, after having afflicted their parents with so much grief, would bring to them a similar consolation! "Young man, son, daughter, I say to thee, arise!" May the joy of their parents be restored! Their constant example, admonitions, and prayers, will bring fruit at last. It may be not before they themselves have found rest in the grave. How often does it happen that children after many years of sin remember their good and kind parents, seek their graves to offer them gratitude, and turn from their evil courses to the great rejoicing, it may be presumed, of their glorified parents.

## PART III.

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

She is, as it were, in widowhood, since her bridegroom espoused to her on the Cross, will not return before the Last Day. But her mourning over the separation from her divine spouse is increased by the spiritual death of her children, whom she has born to Him.

I. Her grief.

1. Who are these that the Church bewails? Her children

who died the spiritual death are represented by those three whom Jesus raised to life.

*a.* The daughter of Jairus had just expired, being yet in the house. Such are all Catholics who fall from the state of grace into sin.

*b.* The young man at Naim, who was carried out of the house, but not yet laid in the grave. Such are the heretics and schismatics who, not through malice, are outside, yet, as being far from the source of the true means of salvation, are in great danger.

*c.* Lazarus, who had entered on the fourth day in the grave, and on whom corruption had already commenced, represents the obstinate enemies of the Church, whether they be baptized or not, the persecutors of the Church, and the deformers of holy doctrine and morals.

2. *What* does she suffer? Like Mary at the foot of the Cross, she suffers a spiritual martyrdom. As the nails and lance pierced her heart, so suffers the Church

*a.* By all offences against God.

*b.* By all scandals.

*c.* By incessant persecutions she has to endure for the sake of Jesus.

3. *How* does she suffer? She suffers like Jesus: She excuses those who crucify her. Prayer and tears are Her weapons. These she pours forth, on Good Friday especially for all heretics, schismatics, Jews and Gentiles.

II. Her joys and triumphs Who can describe their greatness and number?

1. In the lives of the many Saints, with whom He adorns her, and the numerous miracles by which He glorified her.

2. By the conversion of so many sinners, heretics and infidels. England, America, missions in Christian and heathen countries.

3. By her triumphs over the machinations of the enemies of Jesus. How often have they already begun to toll the knell of her decease when Jesus approached His beloved spouse, say-

ing: "Weep not," and confirmed once more His words: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her!"

*Peroration:* Consider it your greatest honor to be a faithful son of your glorious mother, the Holy Church. Partake of her tribulations, pray and struggle with her. Do not multiply her tears. Partake of her honors and joys, and listen not to the calumnies of her enemies.

Rammoser.

## II.

## CONDUCT OF THE CHRISTIAN AT THE DEATH OF THOSE ENDEARED TO HIM.

"And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said to her: "Weep not." Lk. vii, 13. We are all called upon from time to time to pay the last honors to those dearest to our heart, by accompanying them to their last resting place. And before the time comes, we are troubled with the apprehension of that dreadful hour of separation. In such sad moments Jesus is our only solid consolation. True, He does not forbid us to weep over the dead. On the contrary He Himself did not shrink from giving vent to His tender affection by shedding tears at the grave of Lazarus, His friend. But He expects us not to yield to excessive sadness, and He suggests to us as consolatory thoughts, as He did to the widow at Naim.

### PART I.

### IT WAS GOD'S WILL.

It would be a great consolation for friends to make the journey into the next world together; but divine Providence ordains differently. We must bear patiently such separations, by reflecting on the following considerations:

1. It is *God's will.* He is the Lord and Master, and we His unprofitable servants. Therefore, if He take away from us even those who are the dearest to us, we should say with Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord!" Job

i, 21. This divine will, moreover, is the best and wisest. What God does, it is well done, though we may not penetrate into the secret.

2. His will is a *just* will. "God made not death, neither hath He pleasure in the destruction of the living." Wisd. i, 13. "For God created man incorruptible, and to the image of His likeness He made him. But by the envy of the devil death came into the world." Wisd. ii, 23. "The wages of sin, is death." Rom. vi, 23. Therefore this cup of death must go from mouth to mouth.

3. This resignation to God's will is aided by reflecting on the present condition of our deceased friends. "The souls of the just are in the hands of God; and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure was taken for misery; and after going away from us, for utter destruction: but they are in peace." Wisd. iii, 1–3. "Nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more: for the former things have passed away." Apoc. xxi, 4. "Let us, therefore, learn a lesson from the husbandman who rejoices over the corruption of the seed knowing, it to be the beginning of the harvest to come." St. Chrysostom.

4. This resignation to the will of God becomes a sweet necessity, if we love Him above all things. Do you not know the word of the Lord: "Lovest thou Me more than these?" Will you not take to heart what Jesus said: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me?" Mt. x, 37.

PART II.

OUR FRIENDS WILL RISE AGAIN FROM DEATH.

1. Jesus assures us that this happy event will once occur. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live. And every one that liveth, and believeth in Me, shall not die for ever." John xi, 25, 26. Cf. v, 28, 29. Therefore He calls death, sleep. "Lazarus our friend sleepeth." xi, 11. "The girl is not dead, but sleepeth." Mt. ix, 24.

2. St. Paul takes great pains to impress this truth upon the minds of the Christians. He calls Jesus, "the first born from the dead, that in all things He may hold the primacy." Col. i, 18. The morning dawn of resurrection shines upon the tomb of the Christian. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them who have slept through Jesus, God will bring with him." I Thess. iv, 13.

3. We are to see our deceased friends again *after a short separation*, never to be separated again. "Death shall be no more." Apoc. xxi, 4.

PART III.

SORROW AND TEARS OVER THE DECEASED SHOULD BE A BLESSING TO BOTH THE DEAD AND THE SURVIVING.

1. What avail to the dead are your burning tears, if they are not sanctified by extending your helping hand beyond the other side of the grave? By prayers, the Holy Sacrifice, and other good works, you prove the sincerity of your affections.

The Holy Church, the mother of us all, sets us a good example. She causes the corpse to be carried into the house of God, the house of prayer. By the Holy Water she sanctifies the body and refreshes the soul. She uses incense, as a symbol of the prayers to be offered for the faithful departed, and as a sign that she venerates the body of one who shall rise from death. The body is buried in blessed ground, to awake, as sacred seed, on the day of consummation. The head is turned towards the cross, to signify the hope of the faithful deceased. On the third, seventh and thirtieth day after death she desires to have the Holy Sacrifice offered up for the repose of the Christian soul. On the *third*, because on the third day the Lord arose from death; on the seventh, that our Lord may be induced to give rest to the suffering soul, as He rested on the seventh day. On the thirtieth, because, by God's command, the children of Israel bewailed their dead for thirty days. She never forgets the poor souls in her prayers (Commemoration Day of the Souls in Purgatory; the many indulgences applicable to them.)

Such is sincere and genuine charity, which not only weeps, but also helps and saves!

2. Tears should be a blessing to the surviving. "In the house of mourning we are put in mind of the end of all; and the living thinketh what is to come." Eccle. vii, 3. Cf. Is. xl, 6, 7. "I must work the works of Him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John ix, 4. Cf. Eccles. v, 8, 9.

*Peroration:* Let us in this life, where death surrounds us on all sides, trust in the Lord, His word, His Sacraments. And when the hour comes, when they will carry us out of our abode like the young man out of Naim, Jesus will approach us to guard our body for the resurrection of the just.

Joseph Ehrler.

## Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### ON THE VICE OF PRIDE.

"Every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled." Lk. xiv, 11. Reflecting on the many warnings against pride, on the effects of pride as manifested in the fallen angels and our First Parents who desired to equal God, and on the praises and exaltation of humility, we are justly surprised at pride being so frequent. To deter you from this vice, I will draw your attention to the following two points of doctrine:

1. Pride is foolish from its very nature.
2. Pride is fatal in its consequences.

#### PART I.

#### THE VICE OF PRIDE IS FOOLISH FROM ITS VERY NATURE.

We ought all to be deterred from pride by the fact, that the proud endeavors to deceive both others and himself by pretended advantages; and also that, instead of gaining honor and favor, he usually renders himself contemptible and odious. Yet, it will help us to a more thorough conviction how utterly unfounded and foolish pride is, if we meditate:

1. On the nothingness of man.

1. In the natural order:

*a.* What were we, say 100 years ago? Nothing! No one thought of us. No one needed us. God called us from nothingness to life, because He is good. After our birth we were helpless, weak, and absolutely dependent on others.

*b.* What are we now? We are not able to prolong our life for one minute, unless God preserves it; we are subject to frailty of body and soul.

*c.* What are we to be ere long? We are to pass like a shadow. Soon every one of us now alive will be dead, an object of horror, quickly to be forgotten.

2. In the order of grace.

*a.* What have we been? Born in sin, no sooner had we attained the use of reason, than we were sinners by our own actions. Our youth, perhaps, dissipated, profligate.

*b.* What are we to-day? Perhaps hardened in sin, or lukewarm: exceedingly weak. Or if converted and zealous, which is the cause of this change, our merits or divine grace?

*c.* What shall we be at last? Dreadful uncertainty! Either converted, persevering, happy for ever; or obdurate, relapsing, reprobate for ever. And still proud, instead of imploring in the dust the divine mercy and grace?

II. On the greatness of God.

Far be it from me to attempt delineating God's infinite greatness. Let one instance suffice to prove what is human pride in relation to divine greatness. We see it in Pharao.

He boasted of acknowledging no Lord over him. He marched out with a great army, chariots, etc. One motion of Moses' rod was enough to bury his splendor and power in the depth of the sea. How foolish, therefore, to rise against God, the Creator of heaven and earth? "Why is earth and ashes proud?" Eccles. x, 9.

## PART II.

### THE VICE OF PRIDE IS FATAL IN ITS CONSEQUENCES.

These consequences are depicted. Eccles. x, 14-21. The most remarkable of these are:

I. In reference to God.

1. *Apostasy.* "The beginning of the pride of man, is to fall off from God." V. 14. Infidelity, heresy, atheism, contempt of God.

2. *Viciousness.* "For pride is the beginning of all sin." V. 15. Pride was the origin of the First Sin, both in heaven and on earth. Pride is still the fertile mother of countless sins: disobedience, ambition, envy, calumny, etc.

3. *Obduracy.* It is characteristic of the proud man not to acknowledge his errors; wherefore no warning is of avail. It seems dishonorable to him to retract and amend. And since

God resists the proud, the grace is wanting; not as though no grace were possible for him, but because by his pride he puts an insurmountable obstacle in the way of grace.

II. In reference to *human society.*

1. *Anarchy*, caused by the undermining of the pillars of social welfare, fidelity, piety, etc. "Pride shall ruin him in the end. Therefore hath God disgraced the assemblies of the wicked, and hath utterly destroyed them." V. 15-16.

2. *Revolution*, when haughty governments oppress the people, as was the case with Roboam, or when the insolent masses refuse to submit to order. "God hath overturned the thrones of proud princes, and hath set up the meek in their stead. God hath made the roots of proud nations to wither, and hath planted the humble of these nations." V. 17-18.

3. *Ruin* of families, caused by dissensions. The diversity of natural inclination and character demand mutual forbearance. Pride does not allow such forbearance: "There are always contentions among the proud." Prov. xiii, 10. Hence, life is embittered. There is no co-operation in the government of the family, in the household economy, in the matter of education, and in the family relations, and the necessary consequence is, divine wrath. "The Lord will destroy the house of the proud." Pro. xv, 25.

III. In reference to *individuals.*

Not to mention the everlasting consequences of pride, the proud man is unhappy even in this temporal life, being deprived

1. Of *inward peace*, which is never enjoyed by a soul enslaved by her own passions, and at variance with God.

2. Of *outward peace*, since it is continually clouded, by real or imaginary opposition, affronts, humiliation and contempt.

3. Of *the enjoyment of true happiness.* Although the proud have their triumphs, yet are they insufficient to satisfy man's heart, which will always crave for something more. Did not Aman, though in possession of all things, and seeing all prostrate at his feet, feel miserable, because he did not receive the homage of poor Mardochaeus?

*Peroration:* If pride were followed by happy consequences, he who would not overcome it might find some excuse; or if it sprung from wisdom, one could understand how men might be unmindful of its dreadful consequences. Now what excuse will the proud find, who, whether the nature or consequences of their vice be considered, act the fool alike?

Chaire Catholique.

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## II.

## THE REASONS FOR INDUCING US TO KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH DAY.

"When Jesus went into the house of one of the chiefs of the Pharisees, on the Sabbath day, to eat bread, they watched Him." As Jesus was watched by the Pharisees, so are we by the hypocrites of our days, to see whether we observe the Lord's day; according to the words of the Psalmist, saying: "The sinner shall watch the just man." Ps. xxxvi, 12. We are watched by the evil spirits, also, they being our accusers: "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" Job i, 8. We are watched by the angels of God, "for He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Ps. xc, 11. We are watched by God Himself: "The Lord hath looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there be any that understand and seek God." Ps. xiii, 2. Let us then keep holy the Lord's day, according to God's command, and in order to spur ourselves to its observance, let us consider: 1. How just this is; 2. how great a reward is promised to us for its faithful observance; 3. how great punishment awaits those who profane this day.

### PART I.

### THE COMMAND OF GOD AND THE CHURCH SHOULD INDUCE US TO KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY.

God gave, with great solemnity, on the mount Sinai, this commandment: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath

day;" think of it, forget it not. The Church gave the same precept by commanding us to assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, on all Sundays and Holidays. We have the most binding reasons for keeping holy the Lord's days?

1. Because they are dedicated to God and His glory. By observing them, we thank Him for His benefits. For, what else is the Lord's day but the remembrance of our creation, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, of our own resurrection, and of the descent of the Holy Ghost? And the other holidays of obligation, what else are they but the remembrance of His blessings, poured upon us by His birth, circumcision, apparition, ascension, etc., or an exhortation for us to follow the foot-prints of the Saints, and to implore their intercession.

2. Because the Sundays and other festival days have been instituted to recreate, console, and nourish our souls. Our body must, from time to time, recreate itself from the burden of labor, and our soul from the burden of the body. For, as the Holy Ghost says, "the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things." Wisd. ix, 12. Consequently, the soul must have rest also, by lifting herself up to God, and becoming inflamed with heavenly desires. Therefore, in order that the soul may have recreation and support in her struggle against sin, as well as the body in the toil of life, have these holidays of obligation been instituted.

3. Because they have been instituted for the rest and comfort of our body, also. "On the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; thou shalt do no work on it, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy beast, nor the stranger that is within thy gates." Ex. xx, 10. If the masters love rest, they should not refuse the same to their servants. "Remember that thou hast served in Egypt also," urged our Lord, reminding the present masters of their servitude in Egypt. The same might as well be repeated to nearly all in this country with whom things now prosper. Remember that you or your parents have served also in the country you emigrated from.

## PART II.

### THE REWARD PROMISED FOR ITS OBSERVANCE SHOULD BE AN INDUCEMENT TO US TO KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY.

God made this promise through Isaias the prophet, saying: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy own will in my holy day, and call the Sabbath delightful, and the holy of the Lord glorious, and glorify him, * * * then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord, and I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth, and will feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Is. lviii, 13.

1. The first reward, then, is a great delight of the soul. "Then shalt thou be delightful in the Lord." The Ecclesiastical Year is, so to say, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, affording great delight by the variety of the sacred places on our way. We wander to the sepulchre of our Saviour, and the other sacred places, where the mysteries of our redemption were performed. In Advent we enter the holy land, seeing Jerusalem as it were, from a distance. At Christmas we visit Bethlehem. In Lent we view the places of the Sacred Passion and Calvary. On Easter we wander to the Sepulchre. Ascension Day sees us on the Mount of Olives. On Whitsunday we ascend Mount Sion. On Corpus Christi we are spiritually in the cænaculum, etc. On the festival days of the Saints, our soul is refreshed by entering, as it were, their mansions.

It is not necessary that we should be bodily present at the sacred places, in order to find delight and blessing for our soul, since our Lord said to the woman at Jacob's Well: "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when you shall neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father. * * * But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorer shall adore the Father in spirit and truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore Him." John iv, 21. The Church is our Jerusalem, where Jesus Christ is present in the Holy Eucharist, and where we may visit in spirit all the sacred places.

2. The second reward is the hope of attaining eternal happiness, and a contempt of earthly joys. "I will lift thee up above the high places of the earth," *i. e.*, I will give thee a great longing for the heavenly festivities, and "by this you will count all things but as dung." Phil. iii, 8. This reward was once imparted to Tobias, who, whilst in his youth, "when all went to the golden calves which Jeroboam, King of Israel had made, alone fled the company of all, and went to Jerusalem to the temple of the Lord, and there adored the Lord God of Israel." Tob. i, 5. In a greater measure still did St. Mary Magdalen partake of this reward, who, in the solitude she had chosen for her abode, was daily lifted up heavenward by holy angels, to enjoy the celestial festivities. When returned to the earth, she often forgot her earthly food. If we celebrate in a befitting manner the days of the Lord and of His Saints, which remind us of the festivities in heaven, should not earthly amusements, such as plays, dances, parties, theaters, etc, appear to us nauseous, as "the dung of solemnities?" Mal. ii, 3.

3. The third reward is, that God will pour down upon us temporal and spiritual blessings. "I will feed thee with the inheritance of Jacob thy father." What is this inheritance? Isaac prayed over Jacob: "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, abundance of corn and wine." Gen. xxvii, 28. Therefore, by observing the days of the Lord and His Saints fear not to grow poorer; for God will reward your obedience, the same God Whose power made the earth produce fruit in such quantity that no shortcoming was perceived during the seventh year — the year of jubilee — which was a continual Sabbath. Levit. xxv. "Keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary; I am the Lord. If you walk in My precepts, and keep My commandments, and do them, I will give you rain in due seasons; and the ground shall bring forth its increase, and the trees shall be filled with fruit." Levit. xxvi, 2. The promises of temporal and eternal blessings made to the children of Israel, have been made to us also; but curse and punishment will follow the Sabbath-breaker.

PART III.

WE SHOULD BE INDUCED TO KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAYS BY THE PUNISHMENT WITH WHICH THOSE ARE THREATENED WHO DO NOT KEEP THIS COMMANDMENT.

1. This punishment extends first to earthly possessions. Jerem. xvii, 27. "But if you will not hearken to Me, to sanctify the Sabbath day, and not to carry burdens, and not to bring them in by the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, I will kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the houses of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." This punishment has often been literally inflicted on the Sabbath-breakers. Gregory of Tours records such a conflagation evidently sent by the wrath of God in the vicinity of the city Lemorvicina. St. Peter Damian mentions the same punishment inflicted for the same crime upon several citizens of Assisium. It is perilous to war against God.

2. He who profanes the day of the Lord, must fear to be punished in his body also. God commanded in the Old Law that the seventh day should be kept holy under pain of death. "The seventh day shall be holy unto you: he that shall do any work on it, shall be put to death." Ex. xxxv, 2. One such instance is related, Numbers xv, 35, when God commanded a man who had violated the rest of the Sabbath to be stoned. We have the records of dreadful punishments inflicted in our times on perpetrators of the same crime.

*Peroration:* Infinitely greater, however, is the everlasting punishment, of which the punishment on earth is but a shadow. Let our duty as Christians keep us from violating God's Third Commandment. Should not obedience to God and this Holy Church, our own welfare for time and eternity, in regard to body and soul, prevail upon us to be anxious in keeping holy the days dedicated to God, to the Mother of God and the other Saints? If we reverence the Lord's day on earth, we shall be found worthy of solemnizing the Lord's day in heaven, the day which no night is to succeed, when, instead of the sun, the Lamb of God shall shine upon his Elect.

M. Faber.

## Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### HOW WE MAY BE CONVINCED THAT WE LOVE GOD.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." Mt. xxii, 37. This is the greatest and first commandment. He that does not comply with it, is laden with a curse. It is then of the greatest importance to discover whether or no we have fair reason for believing that this love of God is burning in our hearts, and to know what we have to do in order to inflame our hearts with this fire of divine love.

#### PART I.

#### DO YOU LOVE GOD AS YOU OUGHT TO LOVE HIM?

No doubt that many of you if questioned by Jesus: "Lovest thou Me?" would answer with greater boldness than did Simon Peter: "Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee." John xxi, 17. Yet, in many cases, such an assertion would be sheer falsehood. For God requires more than mere words. He requires:

I. A love of faithfulness and obedience. God requires of us to fulfil all his commandments. "Love is the keeping of the laws." Wisd. vi, 19. "Whosoever keepeth his word, the charity of God is truly perfect in him." I John ii, 5.

Now examine yourselves in regard to this faithfulness and obedience.

1. Do you obey all that our Lord commands? "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all." James ii, 10.

2. Do you obey in such a manner as God requires of you? Or do you *a.* disregard some injunctions, because they appear as trifles to you; and *b.* do you obey in many points, merely because you fear the curses which have been pronounced upon disobedience? "Perfect charity casteth out fear." I John iv, 18.

3. Do you obey, *because* God commands? Or do you *a.* obey the divine law for fear of punishment, without hating sin? Or do you for mere selfishness, perform good works, only in view of reward, without regard to virtue itself? Or *b.* when you have broken God's commandment, do you really feel sorry for having offended Him, and make presently a firm resolution to amend your life? Or do you live out of a state of grace for weeks, and months, postponing your confession from week to week.

II. A love of subjection and dependence. You possess this love, if you will all that God wills, be it ever so hard to you.

Now, do you possess this love? God is your sovereign Lord, you are His servants, and as such you should submit to His dispositions. But what is really the case?

1. God deals with you and your possessions as He wills that you may lift up your eyes heavenward. Do you say with Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord, so it is done: blessed be the name of the Lord." Job i, 21.

2. God humbles you, that you may honor Him by your humility. Do you complain, as though God was unjust?

3. God sends you diseases and afflictions. Do you embrace the cross saying: The sacrifice is painful, the cup is bitter, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Mt. xxvi, 39.

4. God scourges with the rod of His wrath the degenerated human race. Do you honor and love God in His wrath also, saying: "I will bear the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned?" Micheas vii, 9.

III. A love of preference.

Whoever is possessed of this love, will prefer God to all creatures.

Do you love God more than your parents, children, friends; more than your earthly goods, honor, health, nay more than your life? Can you say with St. Paul: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword?" Rom. viii, 35.

IV. A love of equality.

This is a love that loves whatever God loves, and hates whatever God hates.

Are you possessed of this love?

1. God recommends you the poor as being His members; your domestics as being His children; your enemies as being His servants, and all men as being His image and likeness. Do you love all these not only in word, but in deed and in truth? Can you say with Job: "If I had denied to the poor what they desired, and had made the eyes of the widow wait * * * let my shoulder fall from its joint, and let my arm with its bones be broken." Job xxi, 16–22.

1. God denounces the persecutors of His church, the deformers of good morals and the promulgators of bad doctrines as His adversaries and persecutors. Do you abhor their conduct, and avoid every unnecessary dealing with them, saying with David: "The perverse heart did not cleave to me: and the malignant that turned aside from me, I would not know." Ps. c, 4.

V. A love of attention and complacency.

This love finds the greatest delight in conversing with God.

Are you possessed of this love? Does it afford you delight to reflect on God, to converse with Him by prayer, to read edifying books, to listen to sermons? Or is the reverse the case? * *

VI. A love of zeal.

This love is intent upon all that may glorify God.

Do you promote the honor of God in your families, by the works of your calling? Promote the eternal welfare of those under your care? Or are your children ignorant of the most necessary Christian knowledge, through your fault? Do you not watch over your domestics? If so, say no longer that you love God, the words applying to you: "They loved Him with their mouth: and with their tongue they lied unto Him." Ps. lxxvii, 36.

VII. A love of desire.

By this love we long for the possession of God. Is your heart penetrated with this love? You say:

1. I love God better than all the treasures of the world. Yet death, as the bereavement of all earthly goods, seems to you the greatest evil, as if you were to say with Agag: "Doth bitter death separate in this manner?" I Kings xv, 32.

2. I love God better than my own life. Yet, when you are struck with a dangerous disease, one must break it to you very cautiously that your life is drawing to an end, so as not to scare you beyond necessity. Where is, then, that love which should be "strong as death?" Cant. viii, 6. When do we hear the pious complaint: "Woe is to me that my sojourning is prolonged?" Ps. cxix, 5.

Happy those to whom their consience bears testimony: "Yes, I love my God!" But to many the words apply: "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." Mt. xv, 8.

PART II.

WHAT WE HAVE TO DO IN ORDER TO INFLAME OUR HEARTS WITH THE LOVE OF GOD.

I. We should often call to our mind certain eternal truths, and ponder over them. Such truths are the following:

1. All visible things say to us: God is infinitely amiable. Men love in nature what is beautiful, though the greatest created beauty is full of imperfections. Why not love God the only true beauty? "O ye sons of men * * * why do you love vanity and seek after lying?" Ps. iv, 4. "O Lord God of hosts, who is like to Thee," etc. * * * Ps. lxxxviii, 9.

2. God has infinitely loved us. His love to us is

*a.* An infinite love, which is simply incomprehensible. To Him we owe all our accomplishments of body and soul.

*b.* An everlasting love. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee." James xxxi, 3.

*c.* An anticipating love. "Let us love God, because God first hath loved us." I John iv, 19.

*d.* An undeserved love. God hath loved us, "when as yet we were sinners." Rom. v. 8.

*e.* A generous love. He sacrificed His Son for us, has sent the Holy Ghost. This Son has given Himself for our food and nourishment. Could He do more than He has done?

3. God wills that we should love Him. He has done so much to gain our affections, has commanded us to love Him, promised us a splendid reward, and threatened with dreadful punishment those who would not love Him. "O Lord, who am I, that thou commandest me to love Thee, and threatenest to punish me for all eternity, if I do not love Thee." St. Augustine.

II. We should banish from our heart all impure flames of sensual passion.

There is a love which can consist with the love of God; but if it becomes our predominant passion, it extinguishes the love of God. "The poison of divine charity is concupiscence." St. Augustine. Such is self-love, the attachment to wealth, honor, worldly amusements, friends, relatives, etc. Subdue, therefore, the power of passion, if you desire the holy fire of divine charity to be ignited in your heart.

III. We should endeavor to have a great devotion.

By the unction of the Holy Ghost the fire of love is enkindled in our hearts. It is in heaven that we must seek this sacred fire, lifting up our minds by incessant prayer and desire. "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. v. 17) for the great grace of loving God truly and sincerely.

*Peroration:* It is in the above manner that you should often examine yourself in regard to the love of God. And when you see cause to confess with St. Augustine: "I have loved thee too late, O ever old and ever new beauty," make use of the above means to enkindle and preserve the flames of divine love. For woe to you, if you should depart this life, your heart void of love of God! "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." I Cor. xvi, 22.

Segaud.

## II.
## THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

Besides the duty of loving God with our whole heart, the Lord in to-day's Gospel impressed on us the precept of charity, saying: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

I. Explanation of this precept.

That we may perfectly understand the precept of loving our neighbor, let us answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of this precept?

*a.* It is a precept including all others, so that he who has fulfilled this has fulfilled every precept. "He that loveth his neighbor, hath fulfilled the law." Rom. xiii, 8.

*b.* Its observance has been appointed by our Lord Himself to be the distinguishing mark of His disciples—of true Christians. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another." John viii, 25.

*c.* It is absolutely necessary for attaining our eternal salvation. For there can be no love of God without the love of our neighbor, and "he that loveth not abideth in death." I John iii, 14.

2. Who is our neighbor? Every man, none excepted. Jesus teaches us so by the parable of the Samaritan. Lk. x, 30–37.

How must we love Him? As ourselves. And that we may love our neighbor as ourselves, we should know first, how we ought to love ourselves. "He alone knows how he ought to love himself, who loves himself for God's sake." St. Augustine. "All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you do you also to them." Mt. vii, 12.

II. What this precept requires of us:

1. Christian compassion, whenever our neighbor is in distress and misery. "Weep with them that weep." Rom. xii, 15. "Be not wanting in comforting them that weep; and walk with them that mourn." Eccles. vii, 38.

2. Fraternal correction by information, warning and pun-

ishment. "If thy brother shall offend against thee, go, and reprove him between you and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou shalt gain thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church." Mt. xviii, 15–17.

3. Frequent and zealous prayer for the welfare of your neighbor. "Pray for one another, that you may be saved." James v, 16.

4. By active help. "Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth." I John iii, 18. "The works are the language of the heart." St. Greg.

*Peroration:* Hold, then, the precept of fraternal charity in high estimation, and endeavor to fulfill conscientiously its demands. "For judgment without mercy to him that hath not done mercy: and mercy exalteth itself above judgment." James ii, 13.

Chevassu.

## Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### ON BAD THOUGHTS.

"The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the thoughts of minds." I Paralip. xxviii, 9. We see this truth confirmed by to-day's Gospel (Mt. ix, 4): "for man seeth those things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart." I Kings xvi, 7. At the same time we are told that God forbids bad thoughts, however secret and hidden: "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" It is, therefore, not superfluous to teach you what every Christian ought to know on this subject. I will then explain to you, 1, when bad thoughts are sinful; 2, how great danger is connected with them; 3, how we should strive against them.

#### PART I.

#### WHEN ARE BAD THOUGHTS SINFUL.

I. But here I must first correct a two-fold error:

1. The error of pious, but scrupulous persons who take for a sin every thought crossing their mind. The following remarks may serve to compose their fears:

*a.* The consent only, not the bad thought in itself, is sin. The whole malice of sin lies in the consent of the person's will. "There is no sin where there is no will to sin." St. Augustine.

*b.* The Saints are also tempted; nay, the devil persecutes them more than sinners, because they are to him a more desirable prey, "because through them his portion is made fat, and his meal dainty. For this cause, therefore, he spreadeth his net, and will not spare continually to slay the nations." Hab. i, 16. St. Paul was tempted by the sting of the flesh, the angel of Satan. * * God allows such temptations in order to try His Saints, or to cleanse them from imperfections. When a soul fearing God is in doubt whether or not she has consented to the

temptation, she needs entertain no fears, because a mortal sin cannot enter such a soul without being fully noticed.

2. The error of those whose consciences are dull, and of those who have not been well instructed; who think that bad thoughts, though they willfully indulge in them, are no sin in themselves, if they only abstain from bad actions. Let such take to heart the following doctrines:

*a.* Whatever is prohibited, we must not desire to do, wherefore the bad thought to which we give our consent, includes the malice of the work.

*b.* Bad thoughts like bad actions, separate us from God, bereaving man of His grace. "Perverse thoughts separate from God." Wisd. i, 3.

*c.* To God all our bad thoughts, no less than bad works, are known: "The Lord is a God of all knowledge, and to Him are thoughts prepared." I Kings ii, 3.

II. In regard to bad thoughts we must distinguish:

1. The *suggestion*, *i. e.*, the original bad thought, as it first presents itself to our mind. This is no sin as yet, but, on the contrary, an occasion of gaining merit, if we instantly try to banish it. "Whenever you resist the suggestion, you will be crowned." St. Antoninus.

2. The *pleasure* with which man dwells on such thoughts. All Catholic Divines teach that we are obliged, under pain of mortal sin, peremptorily to resist the pleasure derived from unchaste thoughts on account of the great danger of consenting. "How long shall hurtful thoughts abide in thee?" Jerem. iv, 14. "With all watchfulness keep thy heart, because life issueth out from it." Prov. iv, 23. A special kind of pleasure is the delectatio morosa, when man is not determined to commit at present the sin of impurity, but delights in it, as if he were committing it.

3. The *consent*, which takes place, when man, though being perfectly mindful of the malice of the act, yet willfully commits it. In connection wherewith we usually find the lustful desire consisting in the determination to do evil, when an opportunity is offered.

PART II.

HOW GREAT IS THE DANGER CAUSED BY CONSENTING TO BAD THOUGHTS.

I. How dangerous it is to consent to bad thoughts, one may infer:

1. From Holy Writ: "Evil thoughts are an abomination to the Lord."

2. From the doctrine of the Church, teaching that bad thoughts, especially such as infringe the ninth and tenth commandments, frequently hurt the soul more than some outward actions. Trid. xiv, de Pœn. Cap. V.

II. The reason why bad thoughts are so dangerous, is manifest from these remarks:

1. They are easier, and therefore oftener, committed than evil deeds, because you have always and everywhere an opportunity in indulging in them; and your heart will soon become habituated to them. "God saw that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times." Gen. vi, 5.

2. Man may commit them on his death-bed, *a*, in consequence of the bad habit contracted; *b*, in consequence of the vehement temptation of the devil. St. Eleazar, when in danger of death, was so vehemently tempted by the devil as to exclaim after his recovery: "How great is the power of the devil at the hour of death!" He, however, resisted the temptation, because he had acquired the habit of putting away bad thoughts.

PART III.

MEANS TO BE EMPLOYED AGAINST BAD THOUGHTS.

I. We should shun all occasion of bad thoughts, as dangerous conversation, bad company, free looks, unchaste pictures, books, and theatres.

II. Expel them instantly, especially unchaste thoughts. Principiis obsta.

III. Make your confessor acquainted with your temptations. The temptation when revealed is half overcome, says St. Philip Neri.

IV. Perform works of penance and mortification, as the Saints did: St. Benedict threw himself into a briar patch, St. Peter Alcantara into a frozen pond.

V. The best of all is to betake yourself to God for refuge, by fervent prayer. "Praising I will call upon the Lord; and I shall be saved from my enemies." Ps. xvii, 4. Invoke the Blessed Virgin, visit the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, kneel before the Crucifix, reflect on the four last things. "Pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear; for I am afraid of Thy judgments." Ps. cxviii, 120.

*Peroration:* May the above instruction serve to quiet scrupulous minds, and to quicken those who are careless! No more than with sparks of fire are you allowed to play with bad thoughts. Do not open your heart to them, lest a devastating conflagration arise. Make conscientious use of the means appropriate to banish such thoughts. We shall easily overcome the temptations by the aid of Him Who strengtheneth us, and in whom "we can do all things."

St. Liguori.

## II.

## ON THE FEAR OF GOD.

"And the multitude seeing it, feared and glorified God." Mt. ix, 8. Would that the hearts of all Christians, that all families and congregations, might be penetrated with the same fear of God, as were the astonished people, seeing the divine power of our Saviour! To promote this fear of the Lord in your hearts, I will speak to you (1) on the motives, (2) on the qualities, (3) on the fruits of this indispensable virtue.

### I. ITS MOTIVES.

The fear of God will reign within us by frequently and earnestly calling to mind

1. God's qualities and perfections, particularly

*a.* His *omnipotence* and *greatness.* "There is none like to

Thee; thou art great, and great is Thy name in might. Who shall not fear Thee, O King of nations? for thine is the glory." * * * Jerem. x, 6 ff. "By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and all the power of them by the spirit of His mouth; gathering together the waters of the sea, as in a vessel, laying up the depths in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord, and let all the inhabitants of the world be in awe of Him." Ps. xxxii, 6-8.

*b.* His *omniscience* and *omnipresence.* "The Lord is a God of all knowledge, and to Him are thoughts prepared." I Kings vi, 20. "The eyes of the Lord in every place behold the good and the evil." Prov. xv, 3; Vide Ps. cxxxviii.

*c.* His *holiness* and *justice.* "Who shall be able to stand before the Lord this holy God?" I Kings vi, 20. "If you invoke the Father, Him who without respect of persons, judgeth according to every one's work, converse in fear during the time of your sojourning here." I Pet. i, 17.

2. God's will and commandment. "These are the precepts, that thou mayest fear the Lord thy God, and keep His commandments and precepts." * * * Deut. vi, 2, 13; x, 10, 12. Therefore he who fears God, has the promise of gaining

*a.* God's approval. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him." Ps. cxlvi, 11. Those who fear the Lord are, according to Malachias iii, 16, 17, written in a book of remembrance, and declared to be God's special possession.

*b.* Temporal and eternal reward. "The mercy of the Lord is from eternity, and unto eternity upon them that fear Him." Ps. cii, 17. "Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is all man." Eccle. xii, 13.

II. ITS QUALITIES.

Genuine fear of God is

1. *Cautious*; manifested

*a.* By the earnest efforts to know and do what is acceptable to God, and by sacred fear of all that could offend and be displeasing to Him. "They that fear the Lord, will seek after the things that are well pleasing to Him." Eccles. ii, 19. Daniel and his companions.

*b.* By a just distrust in yourself. He that fears God, will be aware of his own frailty and the power of his enemies, and therefore flee, watch and pray. "Blessed is the man that is always fearful; but he that is hardened in mind (is destitute of this sacred fear,) shall fall into evil." Prov. xxviii, 14.

*c.* By despising both the favor and fear of men. "Fear not those that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul; but rather fear Him that can destroy both body and soul in hell." Mt. x, 28. Examples: Eleazer, Chrysostom, Thomas More, etc. Ps. cxviii, 120.

2. *Filial*, Rom. viii, 15, therefore

*a.* Not servile fear, which only tries to escape punishment, and has no idea of joyful obedience, out of reverence, and of love;

*b.* But, like the fear of well educated children, who will not run away at the father's coming, nor rejoice at his leaving for a journey; to whom his presence is not troublesome, but who, on the contrary, are nowhere so gay as under the eyes of their good father.

*c.* Always inspired with the confidence that God will help us in all our necessities and temptations: "He that feareth the Lord shall tremble at nothing, and shall not be afraid; for He is his hope." Eccles. xxxiv, 16. Shield and weapon to Judith was her fear of God, wherefore she was not contaminated with sin. Judith viii, 8. This confidence is kept up, though we have offended our Father, if we only repent of our ingratitude. The parable of the Prodigal Son. "Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: he was lost, and is found." Lk. xv, 24.

III. ITS FRUITS.

They are exceeding great in regard

1. To the individual.

*a.* A man fearing God has an invincible horror of sin. He that does not fear God, will shun bad deeds, only for the sake of men, and avoid sin as long as he is afraid of being caught and punished, whilst he will not scruple to perpetrate even the worst

crimes, when he is sure of not being seen by men. But he that fears God will shun sin for God's sake, wherefore even secret trespasses and bad thoughts are abominable to Him; following the example of Joseph of Egypt, and Susanna. "The fear of the Lord hateth evil." Prov. viii, 13.

*b.* Burning zeal for all that is good. He avails himself of every occasion of doing good that offers itself to him; performs good works secretly, when the world does not appreciate them, even when they impose great sacrifices upon him. For he knows that God sees, judges, and rewards. This strengthens his will and courage. "He that feareth God, neglecteth nothing." Eccle. vii, 19.

*c.* Joyfulness in life, in distress, and death. "The fear of the Lord is honor, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of joy. The fear of the Lord shall delight the heart, and shall give joy, and gladness, and length of days. With him that feareth the Lord, it shall go well in the latter end, and in the day of his death he shall be blessed." Eccles i, 11-13.

2. In regard to public welfare.

*a.* The fear of God is the foundation of a wise and just government. "And now, O ye kings, understand; receive instruction you that judge the earth. Serve ye the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling." * * * Ps. ii, 10.

*b.* The source of all evil and social virtues. If the fear of God prevailed amongst all classes and conditions of life, how happy and prosperous would social life be! What is the cause of our lamentable social condition? "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. iii, 18; Cf. Mal. i, 6.

*Peroration:* Blessed then is he that fears the Lord, for the fear of God is the beginning of all wisdom, the crown of virtues, the foundation of prosperity. It is the source of all life.

Aloysius Schloer.

## Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### JOYS IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

"Come to me all that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you * * * For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light." Mt. xi, 28-30. With these words our Saviour earnestly invites us to take up his yoke, promising to refresh us in our grief and affliction. The principal place, where God will refresh us, is His residence, heaven; and there we shall enjoy particularly eight refreshments, of which I am to speak to you.

I. Perpetual youth without the weight of age.

1. On the other side of the grave no old age is known, since before God one thousand years are like yesterday. That which is corruptible will have put on that which is incorruptible. The Angel of Revelation has sworn: "There will be time no more." For this reason the holy angels, though 6,000 years old, are represented by pictures in the shape of youth and children.

2. How *desirable* is this eternal youth, may be imagined from the sorrow with which we feel youth vanishing, and old age approaching! The world rewards the labors of youth with the misery of age. God rewards our labors with everlasting youth. Young man, if you should reach the age of sixty, they will call you an old man; but after you have enjoyed eternal happiness for 6,000 years, your youth will remain.

II. Fulfillment of all our wishes.

1. How indescribable a refreshment! All the splendor of the world, when compared with it, is merely dust. For the eye is not satisfied by seeing, nor the ear by hearing vanity of vanities! Insatiable is the human heart in its desires, never satisfied by created things. How infinitely happy then must be the soul of man when all his desires are fulfilled!

2. And all desires of the Saints are fulfilled indeed *a.* by

their perfect conformity with the will of God. Seeing clearly that they came from God, and their soul resembling God as a child resembles its mother, and being in the bosom of their Heavenly Father, they are at home, and can never wish anything not in accord with His will. *b.* By possessing God. In God they find so inexhaustible a happiness that no addition, consequently no desire, for more is possible; and such infinite power that limits of space and time are no more for them. In the twinkling of an eye they will hover through all the heavens.

III. Joy without sadness.

How disgusting are the joys of this world, mingled, as some of them are, with sadness, whilst others are succeeded by sorrow. After dancing and merriment, comes the dirge.

2. Seek, therefore, those noble joys of heaven, which alone are perfect and lasting.

IV. Wealth without poverty.

1. Ye poor, who are so desirous of wealth, call to mind that only in heaven is perfect, imperishable wealth.

2. Ye rich, who are so afraid of losing your earthly treasures, you will find lasting wealth only in heaven. On earth you are like a rider who gallops past a store well filled with glittering goods, on which he has only time to cast a passing glance.

3. Ye unjust, deceivers, usurers, thieves, covetous, sinners—you will starve in everlasting poverty, unless you part with that unjust mammon you have the effrontery of calling your own. But alas! as tin and copper cannot be separated, so avarice and unjust wealth, when once united, can hardly be separated. They are the bell-metal for the devil's use.

V. Life without death.

1. What is temporal life? A short blooming and withering away, a wave glittering for a moment in the sun and then sinking into the depth. Does a life of this kind deserve all your anxiety and struggling? Yet there is no other choice left than this:

1. Either to live for ever. For the state of the glorified is called life everlasting, where death will be no more.

2. Or to die for ever. For the condemned are not to live, but to die for ever. They are severed from the source of life. Perpetrators of mortal sin and dead for heaven as they are, they constitute the realm of the dead, of which it is written: "And hell and death were cast into the pool of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the pool of fire." Apoc. xx, 14, 15.

VI Health without sickness.

1. How precious this refreshment is, one thought of the various diseases to which men are subject, and of the lamentations of those who are afflicted with them, will teach you.

2. Can any efforts for the enjoyment of this everlasting health be too arduous? How great sums of money do people spend, how many sacrifices do they make, in order to gain health during this short temporal life! But for eternal health every effort is too hard! Nay the most noxious poison of sin is swallowed in order to suffer from everlasting sickness.

VII. Love without hatred.

1. Hatred is a torment in itself. This would be a sufficient reason to devote yourself to perfect charity, that you might be free from such dreadful torment. Much more in view of the everlasting reward.

2. Charity renders man happy. Even on earth charity pours out sweet consolation into our hearts in the greatest afflictions. Example of Job. And, in the next world, the happiness resulting from true love will be unspeakable. You will love God, the Blessed Virgin, the Holy Angels, all the Saints, and they will love you!

VIII. Beauty without deformity.

This beauty will be two-fold.

1. Beauty of the soul. Who of us is there who is capable of having an adequate perception of the soul in the state of grace, by which God is induced to take her into His heavenly house? How foolish then are ye women, etc., to spend so much time for the sake of earthly beauty, and little or no time for the sake of that which is everlasting.

2. Beauty of the body. On the Last Day our Lord will transform our corruptible body, so that it will partake of the splendor and beauty of the glorious body of Jesus Christ. All deformity will be taken from it. But how hideous will be the body of the proud, unchaste, etc.

*Peroration:* Such is the reward prepared for us in our Father's house, if we take upon our shoulders the yoke of Jesus Christ, the sweet yoke of His divine doctrine. And if you are too impatient to wait for this reward in heaven, I promise you a reward on earth, viz.: a clear and quiet conscience. (This is illustrated by pointing to the happy lives of those who are humble, chaste, etc., in contrast to the unhappy lives of those who are proud, unchaste, etc.)

Berthold of Ratisbon.

## II.

## WHAT WE CHRISTIANS HAVE TO DO WITH REGARD TO SANCTIFYING GRACE.

It is of great importance to make diligent preparation for a royal marriage feast, and above all not to appear without a marriage garment. How much greater should be our care to have on the marriage garment of sanctifying grace, since we are the invited guests of the kingdom of heaven! Let me, then, explain to you, what we are obliged to do with regard to Sanctifying Grace.

I. We must highly esteem sanctifying grace, being induced

1. By the judgment of those best able to judge. Its value was no doubt best known

*a.* By Jesus Himself. It is a matter of course that Jesus was very anxious to have His blessed mother endowed with the highest prerogatives. Now, He gave her neither riches, nor earthly honors, etc., but Sanctifying Grace from the first instant of her being conceived.

*b.* By the Angels and Saints. The Angel addressing the

Blessed Virgin, calls her "full of grace;" and all the Saints long for nothing more than for innocence or justification, grace and approval of God.

2. By the advantages of the state of grace:

*a.* *Absolute*, as beauty of the soul, approval, friendship and sonship, of God; supernatural value of all our good works; capacity for the vision of God. The state of grace is, therefore, in some sense as desirable as God and heaven.

*b.* *Relative.* Compare the blessing of grace with what the world affords. What are, in comparison with grace, temporal goods which will never satiate you, and will perish? But, "the blessing of our grace is greater than all the goods of the universe." St. Thomas Aq. What are all the honors of the world? How contemptible and delusive! "The highest nobility is, to be counted among the children of God." St. Cyrillus.

3. The price at which it was purchased.

*a.* By faith we know that we are purchased at a high price. Whatever Jesus did, and suffered, it was done to obtain for us this priceless good.

*b.* Levity prevents you from meditating on it. What Job said regarding wisdom: "Man knoweth not the price thereof," (xxviii, 13,) applies particularly to Sanctifying Grace. Its value and advantages are so often disregarded; foul pleasures, nay bare-faced infidelity are often preferred.

Seeing its value and the contempt of it, one might exclaim with Jeremias: "Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes? and I will weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" ix, 1.

II. We must carefully guard it.

Its value should instigate us to guard this precious gift, especially when we reflect:

1. On the examples of the Saints.

*a.* The Blessed Virgin Mary, though being aware that she could never lose this treasure, was always modest, loved solitude, kept the word of God in her heart, musing upon it; in short, she was a model of circumspection in guarding the grace of which she was full.

*b.* All the Saints take great pains to protect Sanctifying Grace from all dangers. St. Aloysius, for instance, though scarcely knowing temptation, by his own experience, is celebrated for his modesty, discipline, avoidance of the world, etc.

2. On our own frailty. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." II Cor. iv, 7. Now think of your own frailty, your bad inclinations; consult the word of God, history, your own experience; and acknowledge the necessity of watching and praying, the flesh being so feeble.

3. On the many dangers of the world. "He that carries openly a treasure through the streets, deserves to be plundered." St. Gregory. How necessary is precaution at meetings, conversations, in reading! Well may you protect your eyes and ears by a hedge of thorns.

4. On our own sad experience. Oh! that we may after every sin recover the lost grace without delay. Every day's delay brings fresh loss, and extreme danger: Oh! that we may guard the recovered grace with the same zealous care with which temporal losses cause us to take greater heed for the future.

III. We must endeavor to increase it, induced

1. By the example of the Saints, How anxious was Mary to serve God every day, nay every hour. "How great were the continual efforts of the Saints to please God more and more, to be enriched by grace, taking all for dirt, only to gain Christ.

2. By the precept of Jesus Christ. "Trade, till I come." Lk. xix, 13. Search after the precious pearl, the treasure in the earth, for which the merchant of the Gospel sacrificed everything. Alas! far from following this spiritual trade, many live, as if Jesus had commanded us to engage only in earthly traffic: they exert themselves to gain all goods, honors and pleasures of the world, being unconcerned about their own soul, which they are in danger of losing.

3. By its importance. Remember your death-bed. At that trying hour, how paltry will appear to you your earthly pursuits, if you should have neglected to adorn your soul with the garment of sanctifying grace!

4. By its necessity. It is impossible to preserve grace, unless you are intent upon its increase. Whosoever has no desire to love God more intently, to become more acceptable to Him, begins to despise Him. It is for this reason that the talent was taken away from the slothful servant. Mt. xxv, 28. "He who increases not, decreases; he who gains nothing, loses something." St. Leo. "Increase in grace." II Pet. iii, 18.

*Peroration:* We have received this marriage garment by the Sacrament of Baptism, and when lost we recovered it by the Sacrament of Penance. Let us guard it henceforth. Let us value this treasure hidden in ourselves and in others.

Bordoni.

## Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### THE IMMINENCE AND SUDDENNESS OF DEATH.

The ruler at Capharnaum came to Jesus beseeching Him to heal his son who was at the point of death. We are taught by this to approach Jesus by prayer, and to be ever watchful, because death is hanging over us, and to use every effort that death may not surprise us unawares.

PART I.

ON THE IMMINENCE OF DEATH.

That death is close to all of us, we are taught:

I. In Holy Writ:

1. By *assertions*. "I have seen the wicked highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Libanus. And I passed by, and lo, he was not: and I sought him, and his place was not found." Ps. xxxvi, 35, 36. "There is but one step between me and death." I Kings xx, 3. "My days have been swifter than a post." Job ix, 25.

2. By *warnings* reminding us of the folly of those who *a.* draw not the right conclusions from it. "Let us eat and drink: for to-morrow we shall die." Isa. xxii, 13; or *b.* are not mindful of death at all. "Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee, and whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided." Lk. xii, 20. Cf. Ps. lxxii, 4. Mt. xxiv, 38.

3. By *admonitions*. "Remember that death is not slow." Ecclus. xiv, 12.

II. By the light of reason.

"O that they would be wise and would understand, and would provide for their last end." Deut. xxxii, 29.

1. We know perfectly well that we are made of perishable stuff, that our life hangs on a frail thread which may break at any moment, and that we are encompassed by numberless

dangers of life. "It began to die" may be said of every newly-born child.

2. Would that we were wise enough to draw the right conclusions! Joseph, knowing seven sterile years to be close at hand, stored up provisions. Let us who know death to be close at hand, store up merits.

II. By experience.

1. What do we see? A continual coming and going everywhere. Flowers sprout, bloom and wither away. The waves of the ocean ascend, descend and disappear in the abyss. Amongst men, continual diseases and death, generation supplanting generation by swift turns * * * Let us take a walk to our own graveyard: how few, if any, buried there, expected that death was so near! * *

2. We should profit from our experience in regard to the nearness of death. Jesus, when He healed sick persons, gave them salutary admonitions; but "to those whom He had raised from death, He gave no salutary admonitions, they having been instructed by death as an excellent teacher." St. Euthymius.

Shortly before the year of the jubilee, all property was sold at a low price, because it was to be restored. Lev. xxv, 13–16. Application to the worthlessness of all earthly goods on account of death being near at hand. He that reflects on this, will say with Job to the alluring world: "Shall not the fewness of my days be ended shortly? Suffer me, therfore, that I may lament my sorrow a little, before I go and return no more." Job x, 20.

## PART II.

### ON THE SUDDENNESS OF DEATH.

Properly speaking, the just man never dies an unexpected death, for he is always carrying out the word of Christ: "Be ready!" We have then to speak of the sudden death of sinners only, who have to fear death for these three reasons:

I. Because their death may occur at any moment. This is a dreadful punishment of sin, yet it is:

1. A just punishment. The sinner does not deserve to

live any longer. God's first sentence pronounced against the sinner, ran thus: "In what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death." Gen. ii, 17. And Jesus pointing to those eighteen upon whom the tower fell in Siloe, threatens: "unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." Lk. xiii, 4, 5.

2. A *frequent* punishment, though God is long-suffering. When David met Saul, who had fallen asleep, his companion Abisai was about to kill him; but David spared his life. Nevertheless, Saul met a more terrible fate still. All creatures are always intent upon avenging their God. "The creature serving thee, the Creator, is made fierce against the just for their punishment." Wisd. xvi, 24. All cry out: I will kill him. The earth cries out: I will swallow him,—the lightning, the sea, etc. But God says: Do not kill him. Yet, what will happen, unless the sinner amends his life? The parable on the fig tree, Lk. xiii, 6, ff.

II. Because they may die before their time. The just man dying before his time, is called home by the grace of his Heavenly father, and is thus delivered from future sufferings and dangers. "The Just man, if he be prevented with death, shall be in rest. * * * For a spotless life is old age." Wisd. iv. 7, 9. In regard to the sinner, untimely death is

1. The consequence of sin, for "the sting of death is sin." I Cor. xv, 56. "And, behold, a pale horse; and he that sat upon him, his name was Death, and hell followed after him." Thus inordinate passions, as wrath, impurity, intemperance, etc., drive him, as it were, on a wild horse, into the arms of a premature death.

2. The punishment of sin. "Before his days be full he shall perish." Job xv, 32. Cf. xxii, 15, 16. "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." Ps. liv, 24. Cf. Prov. x, 27; Eccle. vii, 8. Curse and blessing of the Fourth Commandment.

III. Because they may die unprepared and impenitent. "The death of the wicked is very evil." Ps. xxxiii, 22. What

could be more horrible than death in sin? Now with this death the sinner is threatened:

1. By the allegory on the fig tree. Jesus found nothing on it but leaves only, and no figs. And though the season for figs had not come yet, Jesus cursed it. "May no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever!" And immediately the fig tree withered away. Mt. xxi, 19. It is manifest that Jesus was not indignant at the tree, but intended to teach us that man must be, at every period of his life, bringing forth, not only the leaves of good promise, but the fruits of good works. If not, he incurs the risk of God granting him no more time, but taking him away prematurely, suddenly and unexpectedly, and condemning him for ever.

2. By distinct threatenings. "Because I called, and you refused; I stretched out My hand, and there was none that regarded. You have despised all My counsel, and have neglected My reprehensions, I also will laugh in your destruction. * * * Then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear." Prov. i, 23-30. "You shall seek Me, and shall not find Me." John vii, 34. "Therefore I said to you, that you shall die in your sins." John viii, 24.

*Peroration:* We pray, "From a sudden and unexpected death, O Lord deliver us;" but at the same time let us prevent an unexpected death by being mindful of God's admonitions. Death will come soon. The time of trial is short. As death may approach you unexpectedly, be ready! Seven days the trumpets sounded around Jericho, before its walls fell down. How long are the trumpets of divine threatenings to sound around the inwalled heart of the sinner?

Bordoni.

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## II.

## THE HOLY SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH THE BEST CONSOLATION IN DEATH.

God chooses many ways to lead the sinner to the knowledge and love of Him, the most efficacious of which are afflictions. Thus the approaching death of his son led the ruler in to-day's

Gospel to the God Incarnate. To Him he betook himself when his son was at the point of death, and prayed that He would come down and heal him. The most impressive messenger of God is death, admonishing the son of Adam to be reconciled to his Creator. Thanks to His infinite mercy, God is anxious, at that dreadful hour, to pour out the whole riches of His grace upon the dying Christian. It is by the Holy Sacrament that He verifies His words: "Come to me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." Mt. xi, 28. They are a great consolation for the afflicted body, for the grief-stricken soul, and at the hour of death itself.

## PART I.

### THE HOLY SACRAMENTS ARE A CONSOLATION TO THE AFFLICTED BODY.

1. Holy Scripture calls death "bitter." King Agag at the sight of death exclaimed: "Doth bitter death separate in this manner?" I Kings xv, 32. Our Saviour Himself trembled at the approach of death. "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." Mk. xiv, 34. Not only the impending judgment, but also the violent separation of body and soul impart to death so great bitterness. "Cast me not off in the time of old age; when my strength shall fail, do not thou forsake me."

2. At this dreadful moment our Lord Jesus is not only anxious to forgive the dying penitent his sins, but in the Most Blessed Sacrament as vaticum He visits personally His afflicted brother, repeating to hi .. the words once spoken to the exhausted prophet Elias: "Arise, eat; for thou hast yet a great way to go." And like the prophet, who "arose, and ate, and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, unto the mount of God, Horeb," the sick man, strengthened by this celestial food, feels Himself comforted and relieved, and prepared to enter upon the journey into eternity.

3. Besides, Jesus Christ has instituted Extreme Unction as a special Sacrament for the consolation and relief of the dying. "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the

priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." James v, 15. In many cases this Holy Sacrament will contribute to the recovery of the sick; and in every case it will either soothe his pains, or at least give him strength to bear them. Experience bears testimony.

PART II.

STILL GREATER IS THE CONSOLATION TO THE AFFLICTED SOUL.

1. However great and bitter the bodily pains may be, the anguish of the soul is still greater. It is caused by the remembrance of the sins of the whole life. At the sight of the levity of his childhood, the stubbornness of his youth, the perversity of his advanced age, the dying man may cry out: "O Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight no man living shall be justified." Ps. cxlii, 2. His anguish is increased, "because the devil is come down having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time." Apoc. xii, 12. If Satan will double his exertions at the end of time to bring the Elect to eternal perdition, he will no less go about like a roaring lion at the last moment of every man. He will remind the struggling soul of all her sins, even of her most secret ones. He will cause doubts about the validity of her penance, and try to drive her into despair.

2. Who is to strengthen the poor soul in her anguish? Jesus Christ Himself! Who through His minister will say to the agonized soul: "I absolve thee from all thy sins, whatever may have been thy conduct in thy past life." And not only are her sins forgiven by the Sacrament of Penance, but also the temporal punishments, due for those sins, are remitted by the plenary indulgence, called General Absolution.

And, to complete the evidence of His charity and mercy, Jesus Christ augments Sanctifying Grace in the reconciled soul by the Sacraments of Extreme Unction and Holy Eucharist, thus re-establishing the image and likeness of God in its original

splendor, that He may present the immortal soul to His Heavenly Father as a glorious soul, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that she should be "holy and without blemish." Eph. v, 27.

The pardoned soul may now say with confidence: "If God is for me, who is against me?" As Pharao of old, on his persecuting expedition, was drowned in the waters of the Red Sea, so the hellish fiend will fall back into the abyss of hell. And, like the children of Israel, our soul will praise the mercy of the Lord and the great deeds of his charity.

### PART III.

### THEY ARE A GREAT CONSOLATION IN THE HOUR OF DEATH.

However great the graces may be, by which man is consoled and protected in his last disease, death will yet remain bitter, because by death all the bonds of life are dissolved, and the future is uncertain. Who will teach man entire resignation to the will of God, so as to exclaim in the words of Holy Scripture: "Surely I come quickly! Come, Lord Jesus!" Apoc. xxii, 20. God again! through the Holy Sacraments.

1. Reconciled with God by the Sacrament of Penance, the dying man sees with a hopeful countenance the approach of death. Though his flesh trembles before this messenger of the Lord, his soul expects Him with resignation and even with joy. She sees in Him the friend who is come to lead her to the marriage feast of the bridegroom, and with St. Paul she says: "To me to die is gain." Phil. i, 21. Moreover the Holy Church leads Jesus Himself to the soul being in anguish, that He may carry her into life everlasting. "If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever." I John vi, 52.

2. This Blessed Sacrament assures him at the same time of the life of his body. As Eliseus raised the dead son of the Sunamitess to life, when "he went up, and lay upon the child, and he put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he bowed himself upon him, and the child's flesh grew warm." IV Kings iv, 34. Thus,

in this Holy Sacrament, the Lord bows Himself upon man at the hour of death, and perfects the most intimate union between him and his divine nature. And now, the germ of resurrection within him, man sinks with resignation into the arms of death, knowing, "that the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

*Peroration:* If we feel sorrow for him who passes his life without seeking for the graces religion affords, how must we weep over him who dies without receiving them! How imprudently do they act who postpone the reception of the Holy Sacraments from day to day! How cruel are they who, instigated by mistaken kindness, conceal from their friends the danger of their condition!

Joseph Ehrler.

## Twenty-First Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.
### THEFT OF VARIOUS KINDS.

The example of the servant against whom, in consequence of unfaithful management of his master's estate, the most severe sentence was pronounced, is followed by many unjust Christians. To them also applies the word: "Pay what thou owest;" and if they do not pay, they will be cast into that dark prison from which there is no rescue, until they pay all their debt. There are especially three classes of robbers who should take to heart the teaching of to-day's Gospel:

Robbers of their neighbor's property.

Robbers of their neighbor's good name.

Robbers of God's glory.

#### PART I.

#### ROBBERS OF THEIR NEIGHBOR'S PROPERTY.

I. It is almost impossible to enumerate all subdivisions of this class of men. To mention only a few, we distinguish between such as commit theft directly, and such as commit it indirectly.

1. Directly. There are many who, although they would indignantly repudiate the imputation of being thieves, are such nevertheless, because they take their neighbor's property secretly and against his will. Such are:

*a.* All those who cheat in measure, weight, quality or value of goods.

*b.* Those who violate the right of their neighbor, such as the advocates of unjust lawsuits, and unjust judges.

*c.* Those who inconsiderately contract debts, and dishonest bankrupts.

*d.* Usurers, etc.

2. Indirectly. All those are guilty of indirect theft who by carelessness damage their neighbor's property. Such are:

*a.* Superiors and officers who do not prevent the infliction of damages, if they can prevent it.

*b.* All hired men who take their pay without performing the amount of work contracted for.

*c.* All those who try to extort from mechanics, hired men, etc., some deduction from the stipulated wages.

*d.* All dishonest finders.

*e.* All idlers, squanderers and feigned beggars.

II. Their responsibility.

We read in the life of St. Medardus that when his cow was stolen, the bell attached to her neck continued ringing, although the thief hid it in a box, and then buried it in the ground, until the cow was restored to her owner. Like this bell goods unjustly acquired cry incessantly: "Pay what thou owest!" This duty of restitution is:

1. *In the highest degree obligatory;* and the obligation is the more binding in proportion to the value of the stolen goods, and the property of the rightful owner. A sum being sufficient for the support of one day is generally considered enough to make the dishonest appropriation of it a mortal sin.

2. *Indispensable.* No priests, no jubilee can grant dispensation. For the priests are empowered by God to release what the sinner owes to Him, but not what he owes to his fellow-man. St. Thomas Aquinas. Even after death, "res clamat ad Dominum."

PART II.

ROBBERS OF THEIR NEIGHBOR'S GOOD NAME.

I. Different kinds:

1. Detractors, who, without sufficient reason, publish the vices of their neighbor.

2. Calumniators who are so malicious as to attribute falsely vices to their neighbor.

3. Listeners, whose sin is the greater, the greater the detraction, and the more they encourage the slanderer by listening, questioning, applauding, etc.

II. The guilt.

The guilt of the slanderer is manifest, since he attacks one of the most precious of possessions, for a "good name is better than great riches." Prov. xxii, 1. The greatness of the guilt is in proportion:

1. To the eminence of the person that is slandered (the guilt increases with the dignity of the slandered person,) and of the person that slanders. (The poison proceeding from the tongue of an influential person creates greater damage).

2. To the object of the slander. This is self-evident.

3. To the consequences resulting from it.

III. The obligation of restitution it incurs, is:

1. *Urgent.* "Pay what thou owest." He that has laid hands on so noble and important goods of his neighbor, how can he find forgiveness without making full restitution?

2. *Exceedingly difficult.* *a.* In regard to the object. Who can stay the notoriety of vices once divulged? who can repair the damage sustained? repair the grief, etc.? *b.* In regard to the hearers who, according to human nature, are inclined to believe the evil rather than the good. *c.* In regard to yourself, since you must everlastingly confess yourself to be a liar and calumniator?

PART III.

ROBBERS OF GOD'S GLORY.

I. Such are principally the robbers of souls:

1. These who give scandal by bad example, by words of double meaning, lascivious songs, shameful pictures, books, etc.

2. Seducers who, like Satan, make it their occupation to ruin souls by commandment, counsel, etc.

3. Negligent. Superiors and parents, who like Heli, neglect their duty, and thus bring on the ruin of souls confided to their care.

II. How great is the responsibility! You may deduce this

1. A minori. "He that striketh, and killeth a man, dying let him die. He that killeth a beast, shall make it good * * * Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth shall he restore." Lev. xxiv, 17, ff.

2. Ad majus. What will justice require of him who has been the means of casting into hell an immortal soul purchased at an infinite price? "Soul for soul." And if he has ruined ten, nay one hundred souls, is it not a greater debt than 10,000 talents? Must not hell await him?

III. What outlet of escape is yet open?

No other than the one of the servant in the Gospel.

1. "That servant falling down, besought him, saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." Ergo contrition, penance in the confessional.

2. "I will pay thee all." Seek to gain more souls than you have ruined. Instead of scandalizing, edify your fellowmen. Penitent David promised: "I will teach the unjust Thy ways, and the wicked shall be converted to Thee." Ps. L, 15.

*Peroration:* Mind! You are now convinced that to all these classes of the unjust apply the words of St. Augustine: "Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum." Therefore guard yourself against committing any injustice; and if you were ever guilty of any, make restitution.

Venedien.

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## II.

## GOD PUNISHES ON EARTH, IN PURGATORY, AND IN HELL.

We all are indebted to the King of kings, and like the debtor of the Gospel, are liable to punishment; for every one is to be punished in proportion to his indebtedness. The Lord has already ordered the t..rturers to execute on us the sentence passed over us; for surely God will punish us for our sins, either in time or in eternity; on earth, in purgatory, or in hell.

### PART I.

### GOD PUNISHES AS A FATHER IN THIS WORLD.

1. The king of the Gospel acts as a father. He is rigid in demanding his account of his servant, but gentle in his comparison. "And the Lord of that servant, being moved with compassion, let him go, and forgave him the debt."

2. God acts as a father by visiting and chastising His servants in this mortal life:

*a.* Afflictions come from God, not from our enemies, from the devil, etc. "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away," says Job i, 21, not the Sabeans or the Chaldeans. V. 15, 17.

*b.* His intention is that of fatherly love: He chastises us here, that He may spare us hereafter; He chastises the body, in order to be propitious to the soul.

3. Therefore we should thank our Father for His chastisements, like Job, who said: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Job i, 21; and we should seek consolation by reflecting on the end for which God sends us afflictions and tribulations.

PART II.

GOD PUNISHES AS A JUDGE IN PURGATORY.

He who enters the next world before giving full satisfaction for his sins has to undergo a punishment imposed upon him, not now only by paternal love, but also by inexorable justice. In purgatory God punishes as judge.

1. The king of the Gospel delivered the wicked servant to the torturers, until he should pay all the debt. The judge weighs the punishment exactly by the debt. The "last farthing" must be paid. Mt. v, 26.

2. How great then is our debt?

*a.* It consists of the punishment due for so many venial sins, which we commit daily, by vain thoughts, idle words, impatience, etc. How great is their accumulation in one year, how great in our whole life!

*b.* Of the temporal punishment due for mortal sins remitted, but not sufficiently atoned for.

*c.* How long may we have to suffer, till the "last farthing" be paid?

St. Vincentius Ferrerius mentions that somebody had to suffer one year for one venial sin, whilst another had to suffer one month, and a third one, fourteen days. How long is our purgatory to last for one hundred, nay thousands of venial sins?

3. Therefore it should be our daily task to give satisfaction

for our daily venial sins, by charitable acts, by acts of self-denial, by frequently making acts of perfect contrition. Cf. Trid. xiv, cap. viii. de pœn.

PART III.

GOD PUNISHES AS AN ENEMY IN HELL.

Whoever departs this life in mortal sin will be punished by God, not as father, nor as judge, but as enemy, "with the wound of an enemy" (Jerem. xxx, 14) in hell.

1. He will be punished without compassion. "I will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come to you which you feared." Prov. i, 26. At the same time the Angels and Saints will praise God's justice. When Alexander the Great, with his own hands, set the Persian Capitol Susan on fire, the soldiers encamped outside of the city hastened to put out the flames. But seeing their king holding a firebrand in his hands, they vied with one another in their efforts to burn every house. Thus God chastises His enemies by everlasting fire, and the angels being aware of His being the author of it, praise His justice for ever.

2. He will be punished without end, for ever. He who persists in being an enemy of God, throughout his mortal life, will have God for his enemy for ever also. Now he who dies in mortal sin, constitutes himself an enemy of God for ever, because in the next world there is no more time to recover Sanctifying Grace, the source of divine friendship. "The punishment cannot cease, whilst the debt lasts." St. Thomas Aquinas.

3. Let us reflect upon the great malice of sin, which is punished for ever. And yet we dare to commit it! how great is our blindness!

*Peroration:* From this threefold punishment three classes of men should take a warning. Those who are in mortal sin may fear God's everlasting wrath, and be converted before it be too late. Those who have been indifferent about venial sins, should atone for them in time, while yet alive. The just who are chastised on earth should acknowledge God's paternal love, and carry patiently their cross, saying with St. Augustine: "Here burn, here cut, only in eternity spare me, O Lord."

Ruoff.

## Twenty-Second Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### GOD AND THE WORLD.

Solomon settled, with great wisdom, the dispute between the two women, each of whom claimed the same child to be her own. In a similar way, God and the world contend for man, for his thoughts, words, and acts; and Jesus Christ gives the decision: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." The world is right in laying claims to us as members of the human family. But superior to all claims is the claim of God as our Creator and Lord. To God we must first offer all things which are ours:

I. OUR THOUGHTS AND WORDS.

To God belongs the first and best part

I. Of our thoughts. To devote our thoughts to Him principally, is

1. *Just.* *a.* God, being the Creator of our understanding, is the noblest object, the highest subject, of our thoughts. *b.* God is the most amiable being; all perfections are in Him. All that is good, beautiful, and true, originates in Him. How worthy, therefore, of our love is God! But does he love God, who seldom thinks of Him? "Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also." Mt. vi, 21. *c.* What are we without God? Ignorant creatures, erring in darkness, unless supported by divine power, and informed by divine light.

2. *Consoling.* The remembrance of God expels all sadness from our hearts. For His power and mercy are unlimited. We find Him everywhere; nobody can deprive us of Him, nobody can falsely accuse us with success. "My soul refused to be comforted; I remembered God, and was delighted." Ps. lxxvi, 3. It is a foretaste of the joy in heaven, as is evinced by the lives of the Saints.

3. *Salutary.* Every reflection on God, however short,

nourishes and strengthens our soul, and is meritorious for eternity, whilst reflections on earthly matters are frequently but loss of time.

The world claims a part of our thoughts for our body, family, pursuits, friendships, etc. We do not object, but complain that God is often neglected for these.

II. Of our words. This is also

1. *Just.* *a.* From God we received our language—a daily blessing, for which we owe God incessant thanks. How heartily Daniel returned thanks for the dinner sent him through Habacuc. "Thou hast remembered me, O God." Dan. xiv, 37.

*b.* Speaking of God and His promises is a proof of our love for and confidence in Him. To be ashamed of it, after the example of the world, is a proof of the reverse. If the pilgrim takes a delight in conversation respecting the Holy Land he is bound for, why should not we feel delighted in conversing of our fatherland above? "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Mt. xii, 34. *c.* Morning and evening, Sundays and Holidays, are the most suitable times for speaking to and of God. St. Jerome says of the people living in Palestine at his time, that they would sing psalms and other sacred songs, when ploughing.

2. *Consoling.* Pious conversation about God (*a*) gladdens our heart. ("Thy justifications were the subject of my song, in the place of my pilgrimage" Ps. cxviii, 54). *b.* purifies our heart, and imparts divine grace. "Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing and making melodies in your hearts to the Lord." Eph. v, 19.

3. *Salutary.* "Where there are two or three gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of them." Mt. xviii, 20. The disciples, by speaking on their way to Emmaus of His Sacred Passion, invited Jesus to join them. But wherever the conversation is profane, obscene, or slanderous, Satan will come in to rejoice over it.

The world also claims a part of our words to procure the

necessaries of life, to comply with the demands of friendship, etc. But the world requires too much, and in most cases acquires too much, even when it does not obtain everything.

II. OUR POSSESSIONS AND PURSUITS.

To God belongs the first and best part

I. Of our possessions. This is

1. *Just.* *a.* Holy Scripture commands it. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and give Him of the first of all thy fruits." Prov. iii, 9. Of the avaricious fool, to whom God announced his approaching death, it is written: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." Lk. xii, 21. *b.* At all times God received such an offering. Cain and Abel brought sacrifices without special command. Solomon expended twice as much towards building the temple as for his palace.

2. *Salutary.* *a.* We induce God to give new blessings, whenever we bring him sacrifices by alms, or by presents for the benefit of his Church. *b.* We gather treasures for life everlasting. How foolish it would be to neglect all foresight for the winter, for old age! More foolish in regard to eternity. "He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly." II Cor. ix, 6.

What does the world receive of our possessions? The better and greater part almost invariably.

II. Of our daily pursuits. This is:

1. *Just.* God has done so much for us; and is it wise to take so great pains only for a time? "What profit shall a man have of all his labor, and vexation of spirit, with which he hath been tormented under the sun?" Eccle. ii, 23.

2. *Necessary:* *a.* for the salvation of the soul. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth * * * but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Mt. vi, 19, 20. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life." John vi, 27. *b.* Necessary to gain heaven, which must be conquered with violence, and is worth any efforts,

since its beatitude surpasses our understanding. It is a lamentable fact, that we labor for the world almost exclusively.

O that we would remember God and our soul first in all our actions, after the example of Jesus Christ and the just Abel!

M. Faber.

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## II.

## OUR RELATION TO THE ANGELS.

*(On the first Sunday of September, being the Day of the Holy Guardian Angel.)*

It is wholesome, frequently to raise our eyes from the society of mortals up to the region where the blissful spirits incessantly praise God, exhorting us to join their holy occupation, and awaiting us, to partake of their happiness. Thus we should view our life in a purer light, and follow nobler principles. Our Divine Saviour admonishes us by the same consideration to regulate our conduct with regard to our fellow-men, however little and insignificant they may appear in the natural order of things. "Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their Angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven." Mt. xxiii, 10. Let us then meditate on the mutual relation between the Angels and us, and our duties resulting therefrom.

### PART I.

### WHAT ARE THE RELATIONS OF THE HOLY ANGELS TO US?

The "Communion of Saints" is an article of faith. Hence the heavenly spirits, and men who are called to the same felicity, are not strangers to one another. We are informed of an intimate relation existing between them. The mutual bond is the bond of charity. This charity, of which the Holy Angels are capable in a high degree, is thus manifested:

1. They sympathize sincerely with our welfare, as the perfection of their charity implies. Therefore, they have the most ardent desire, that God may grant us His grace and blessing, and that we may do what is good and conducive to our salvation, and be converted from what is evil. Proofs of this are:

*a.* Their exultation at the birth of our Saviour. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."

*b.* Their joy "over one sinner that doth penance." Lk. xv, 7.

2. Their sympathy is active. True charity is not content with mere sentiment; it is anxious to give every possible assistance. "Are they not ministering spirits, sent to minister for these, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" Heb. i, 14.

*a.* Holy Scripture furnishes many examples. Lot saved; Agar in the desert; Tobias, both father and son; Daniel in the den of lions; the three young men in the furnace; Peter in prison. Besides, we read of innumerable instances in the lives of Saints.

*b.* The doctrine of the Guardian Angels is, then, well founded, and presents the holy angels as being anxious to protect us from perils of the body, and much more, to protect our soul from sin, and lead her to virtue.

3. They intercede for us with God. Prayer is the bond by which earth is united with heaven, and intercession is the wish for another's welfare and salvation uttered before God. If, then, on the one hand the Angels take so great interest in our well-being, and, on the other hand, always see the face of the Father who is in heaven, it cannot be conceived, that they should not remember us before God. This is corroborated:

4. By analogy. If men are able and obliged to pray for one another, and if the "continual prayer of a just man availeth much," (James v, 16) why should not the angels pray for us with much greater avail? And if the just departed, the Saints, pray so much for us, (II Mach. xv, 14) why should not the angels, especially those who are assigned to individuals as their especial guardians—as "their angels"—do the same charitable work?

*b.* By explicit statements. "When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead * * * I offered thy prayer to the Lord." Tob. xii, 12. "And the Angel of the Lord answered and said: "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Juda, with which Thou hast

been angry? this is now the seventieth year. And the Lord answered the Angel good words, comfortable words." Zach. i, 12, 13.

4. They are to be our future associates in the everlasting joys of heaven.

*a.* Jesus Himself assures us that in the next world there shall be no great difference between us and the Angels, nay that we shall be as the angels of God in heaven. We are to be similar to the Angels, not only as to grace and happiness, but even as to nature; for "it is sown an animal body; it shall rise a spiritual body." I Cor. xv, 44

*b.* This is the most intimate relationship, the holy angels looking on us as their fellow-servants (Apoc. xix, 10), as children of the same Father, called to fill up the vacancies left by the reprobate angels. Hence their excessive charity, care and zeal in our behalf. In return we should love, thank and imitate the Holy Angels; for their intimate relation to us obliges us to a corresponding conduct in regard to them.

PART II.

ON ACCOUNT OF THE RELATION OF THE ANGELS TO US, WE ARE OBLIGED TO ADOPT A DEMEANOR TOWARDS THEM CORRESPONDING WITH THAT WHICH THEY ADOPT TOWARDS US.

1. We owe them genuine friendship, because they are our best friends.

*a.* Love them in return, and be thankful for their services and loving sympathy.

*b.* Avoid whatever could render you unworthy of a friendship so honorable for you. Never, never insult them by preferring to their friendship the friendship of sin and Satan.

2. We should burn with earnest zeal for our own salvation, that is to say:

*a.* Sincere desire for grace and virtue. If the angels entertain the most ardent wishes for our salvation, should we, then, persecute ourselves with hatred, the bitter fruit of which must be tasted in eternity?

*b.* Earnest care, effort, watchfulness. For it is not the mere desire, but the energetic will, that leads to salvation. Ye parents, what good can the celestial guardian angels do for your children, if in words and deeds you counteract them? Ye children, what can your guardian angels do for you, if you obstinately despise their inspirations?

*c.* Continual longing for heaven. In heaven there are our best friends; there they await us; up to heaven let us raise our eyes.

3. To a devout veneration of the Angels. We should be instigated not only by their sublime dignity and magnificence, but particularly by gratitude for their charity and beneficence. This veneration, as the veneration of the Saints, implies:

*a. Invocation.* If they continually intercede for us at the throne of divine majesty, it is no doubt reasonable that we should recommend ourselves to their intercession.

*b. Imitation.* If we expect to partake of their glory in heaven, we must while on earth partake of their sanctity. We should imitate them

*First* as angels in their love to God. For this their love, sacred art, after the design given by God Himself for the temple in Jerusalem, represents them with wings, expressive of their speed in fulfilling God's holy will. Jesus Himself exhorts us to follow their zeal, by teaching us to pray: "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." When Jesus taught this prayer there were no Saints but angels only in heaven.

*Secondly*, as guardian angels in their love of men, by striving to become guardian angels of men also, by protecting them from all perils of salvation, by exhorting them to virtue, by consoling and assisting them.

*Peroration:* Jesus Christ has recommended to our particular care the little ones, on account of their guardian angels. Take heed, ye parents, that you educate your children under your own roof, and send them to Catholic schools. All of you, take heed that you never scandalize children.

Bishop B. Galura.

## Twenty-Third Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### REMEMBER YOUR DEATH.

Man's innocence is secured as long as he remembers his own death; whenever he loses sight of that, sin gains possession of him. The first pages of Holy Scripture teach this very doctrine. For in order to guard our first parents against eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God reminded him of death: "For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death;" whilst the devil, in order to seduce Eve, tried to persuade her that she should not die, saying: "No, you shall not die the death."—I hope then to contribute to your spiritual welfare by exhorting you, not to shun the earnest thought of death. To do so would be

I. The sign of a bad life.

II. The foretoken of an evil death.

#### PART I.

#### THE SIGN OF A BAD LIFE.

For, those Christians who hate to think or hear of death, lead:

I. A slothful life.

1. They are not mindful of their destiny, either in the present world or the world to come. "O, that they would be wise, and would understand, and would provide for their last end." Deut. xxxii, 29.

2. They are without energy or strength of mind, so that Christian self-denial is impossible to them.

3. The theological virtues grow cold in their hearts. How can he who shudders at the very thought of dissolution be possessed of a vivid faith, strong hope and burning charity?

4. They make no use of one of the means of inducing man to fulfill his duties and exercise virtues. Gentiles chose Death for their counselor; and Christians should not neglect to do the same.

II. A wordly life.

Whilst the Just, like Abraham, considered their burial-place as their only property,

1. The above described Christians search and love earthly things with as much desire and attachment as though they had to stay on earth forever; and at the same time fear and fly whatever has the appearance of danger for their life, thus being in contradiction with themselves.

2. They deceive themselves, confiding in their riches, health, etc., as if these goods would last forever; and, devoting themselves to the fulfillment of the desires of their hearts, the fat of the earth and their own flesh are the only objects of their care. "He that is of the earth, of the earth he is, and of the earth speaketh." John, iii, 31. "Whose end is destruction; whose God is their belly; and whose glory is in their shame: who mind earthly things." Phil. iii, 19. Cf. Ps. lxxii.

3. Unmindful of the Lord's warnings that they are dust, and fascinated by their attachment to the world, they are unaware of the sin undermining their health; of the passions shortening their life. * * *

PART II.

THE FORETOKEN OF AN EVIL DEATH.

"The death of the wicked is very evil." Ps. xxxiii, 22; and according to their life will be their death also.

I. Unexpected will be the death of the idlers.

As they did not care for the salvation of their souls, death will take them unawares. This is confirmed:

1. By the warning of the Lord, "If that evil servant shall say in his heart: My Lord is long a coming * * * and shall eat and drink with drunkards, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he expecteth not, and in an hour that he knoweth not, and shall separate him, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Mt. xxiv, 48. Because they evaded the remembrance of death, it will come to them unexpected.

2. By daily experience, reminding us that death always comes too soon, even in regard to temporal affairs. How much more in regard to eternal things!

3. By this carelessness and levity, which prevents them from

doing penance. "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." Lk. xiii, 2–5. It is the exception, not the rule, that Christian virtues are suddenly acquired.—They will die an evil death, because they led an evil life.

II. Bitter will be the death of the worldlings.

If the remembrance of death is so bitter (Eccles. xli, 1),

1. How bitter will be its real approach, when the sweet and firm bonds whereby you are tied to the earth must be torn to pieces? You will say with Agag, king of Amalec: "Doth bitter death separate in this manner?" I Kings, xv, 32. When the watcher and holy one will cry aloud: "Cut down the tree." * * * Dan. iv, 10, 11.

2. How painful and desperate must be the undeceiving of him who closed his eyes to his mortality until the hour of death, when he finds that he can take along with him nothing whatever of that which he delighted to call his own, and that the everlasting goods are lost to him forever! "After that Alexander * * * had subdued the countries of nations, and princes * * * he fell down upon his bed, and knew that he should die." I Mach. i, 6. The sinner on his death bed will awake like Holofernes, when the sword cut through his throat.

*Peroration:* Up to this hour you have not felt the icy cold hand of death. But have you not deserved it by your carelessness?—Are you secured against its sudden coming?—Should not its uncertainty render you cautious? If so, you should live a good life, and die a good death. De la Rue.

## II.
## THE SLEEP OF DEATH.

In this present season the whole of nature reminds us of the vanity of all things, and of death. The Holy Church does the same in to-day's Gospel; and at this time, perticularly devoted to the commemoration of the Souls in purgatory, she leads us to the graves of the deceased. We pray for them, knowing that they are not dead, but sleep only. Would there were no more cruel kinds of death than theirs! But now there is a three-

fold death: those who die the first or the second death, sleep merely, while those who died the third death, cannot sleep.

PART I.

"SHE IS NOT DEAD BUT SLEEPETH."

This word may be applied:

I. To those who are spiritually dead, whilst they are yet in their bodily frame.

1. We know of a death of the soul. It is mortal sin. "When concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: but sin when it is completed, begetteth death." James i, 15. "She that liveth in pleasures is dead while she is living." I Tim. v, 6. How true this is we conclude from the nature of grace, by which we are united with Jesus as the branch is united with the vine. In consequence of mortal sin we are torn off branches, losing all ability for supernaturally goods works.

2. Those who are spiritually dead can be raised to life, as long as they have not departed this life. Of the Prodigal Son we read, that he "was dead, and is come to life again." Lk. xv, 24. That the greatest sinner receives sufficient grace for his conversion is a doctrine of the Church; and that God grants special graces to fervent prayer, is no less certain. Upon the supplication of Jairus our Lord concluded to raise his daughter to life, saying: "She is not dead, but sleepeth."

Therefore, O sinner, awake who sleepest! The Lord calls for you, and leads you by your hand. Parents of erring children! never despair, but pray with Jairus and Monica, that the Lord may call to life those who are not irrevocably fallen into the arms of death.

II. To those who depart this life in the state of grace.

1. Death is a sleep; as such it is represented by Holy Scripture. We read it recorded that Moses, David, etc., slept with their fathers; that Stephen slept in the Lord; Holy Scripture exhorts us not to bewail the dead after the manner of the heathens, and describes the condition of the just deceased as a rest after hard labor, and consoles us with our future resurrection.

Application: Joy of our great reunion after resurrection.

Supplication for those not perfectly cleansed from the remains of sin. "Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord."

PART II.

SOME ARE DEAD AND CANNOT SLEEP.

I. We know of an everlasting death also. Whoever was surprised, when in mortal sin, by physical death, will never be called to spiritual life again. This we are taught

1. By faith, which tells us of everlasting reprobation, final separation of the wheat from the cockle, of everlasting torments, etc.

2. By nature, which does not object to the duration of punishment whilst the debt lasts. Therefore work in day time, before the night approaches.

II. Those in hell *cannot sleep*. "The smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever; neither have they rest day nor night." Apoc. xiv, 11. Neither the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, nor the intercessions of the faithful can give them rest. "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that any one should ask for it." I John v, 16.

The causes of their restlessness are:

1. Everlasting torments of the senses, and torments caused by the loss of God and heaven. Hence no rest, but gnashing of teeth for ever.

2. The worm that will never die, *i. e.*, the evil conscience, that will not allow them rest neither day nor night, overwhelming them with insupportable reproaches.

3. All the damned surrounding them: the evil spirits; those who were scandalized and seduced by them.

4. Those living yet on earth, who continue to sin because they have been seduced by them. Every obligation not fulfilled, every accusation of the living, calls divine revenge upon them. They hear the cursing of the seduced, the piercing cries of the oppressed widows and orphans, the accusations of the defrauded.

*Peroration:* We canno find rest except in God. In God we find no rest except by the observance of His commandments, both here and hereafter. "Take up My yoke upon you * * * and you shall find rest to your souls." Mt. xi, 29. Leu.

## Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost.

### I.

### THE DAY OF JUDGMENT A DAY OF DREADFUL DISCLOSURES.

The remembrance of the Lord's second coming produced in the first Christians that wonderful heroism of faith and all virtue, which gives a sufficient explanation of the fact that with unlimited desire they longed for this close of the history of mankind. How differently act the Christians of our times! Seldom does the remembrance of that day of doom produce any other effect than that of servile fear. In our present meditation it is proposed to endeavor to arouse the sleepers. To this end we consider the day of the Last Judgment as the day of dreadful disclosures, of boundless confusion.

PART I.

THIS TERRIBLE DAY WILL UNMASK THE SINNER TO HIMSELF.

Satan, the spirit of the world with its teachings and prejudices, pride, self-love united with levity and carelessness, render the sinner blind in regard to himself. But that day will open his eyes. For it is

I. The day of divine judgment.

1. An inexorable judge will try him, regardless of those modifications and free constructions of the law introduced by levity.

2. A judge charged to avenge his Father's honor, and to bring to light all things which may serve to glorify God and chastise the sinner.

3. The All-knowing God, to whose eyes the most secret thoughts and designs are known.

4. A God of awful majesty, whose countenance dissolves the heavens, throws the elements into confusion, etc.

II. The day of trial for all.

"All nations will be gathered together before Him." All will be judged by the same law, and by His impartiality Christ will confound

1. The *idle excuses* of the sinner, built upon his social position, upon the character and morals of his century, or the peculiarity of his disposition, etc.

2. The *pretensions of pride.* Honor, wealth, birth, etc., will not be regarded. The wicked king will tremble as well as the vicious beggar. How great will be the humiliation!

III. The day of trial for all things.

There will come to light:

1. The *use of our whole life:* the sins of our childhood, the excuses of our youth, the worldly mindedness of maturer age, the slothfulness of old age. How great will be our consternation at the view of an unholy life, void of good deeds, when suddenly unrolled before our eyes!

2. The *secrets of our heart*, which were hidden from us before; the virtues of which we believed ourselves possessed, and with delight heard praised by others. Then we shall behold an endless array of baseness, ridiculous designs, dishonest purposes, of which we had boasted heretofore.

3. The low standard of our good works, which had appeared to us in a favorable light; the true motives of our alms-giving, of our apparent zeal for God's honor, in fulfilling the duties of our vocation; our cold prayers, the formality of frequent reception of the Holy Sacraments. "And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with lamps." Soph. i, 12.

4. The *lack of good works it was our duty to have done:* omissions, opportunities not made use of, culpable ignorance, souls lost by our negligence, the thousands of hours void of merits. How great will be the grief of a soul thus enlightened!

5. The *many abused graces:* so many pious inspirations, so many instructions, so many good natural gifts.

6. The *many ways* in which we were *accessory* to the sins of others: by scandal, seduction, command, counsel, consent, etc.

A dreadful spectacle for the sinner! which will undeceive him, crush him, drive him into despair. Crushed in his own experience, he will also be crushed before the whole world.

PART II.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT WILL UNMASK THE SINNER TO ALL CREATURES.

There is a double disorder prevailing in this world: (1) Vice often evades the public ignominy it deserves. (2) Vice climbs up to the summit of honor, whilst virtue does not find due acknowledgment. This disorder is adjusted by the Last Judgment.

I. The conscience of the sinner is publicly exposed.

The most hidden sins are made known to the whole world. "There is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed; nor secret that shall not be known." Mt. x, 26. To form some idea of the greatness of the abasement, we must remember:

1. The *number and character of the witnesses.* All the angels, Saints and sinners, friends and foes, former superiors and subjects all are compelled to assist. There is none of the *consolation* which was readily found when we were in similar trouble on earth. *a.* Here the knowledge of contemptible vice was confined to a limited number of witnesses, whom you might escape. But at the Last Judgment all angels and men will know your wickedness. *b.* Here there is scarcely a man so bad who has not some friends left. *c.* Here many are indifferent to our vices. There none will be indifferent to the state of our soul; reprobates and Saints will rise alike against the sinner. "The first shall * * * laugh at him, and say: Behold the man that made not God his helper, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and prevailed in his vanity." Read the beautiful passage Deut. xxxii, 15, sqq.

2. The *solicitude* exercised on earth in order to delude men. Wickedness is sheer fraud and hypocrisy. Disclosure of turpitude is the evil dreaded. On that day, however, "behold I will gather together all the lovers with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all whom thou hast loved, with all whom thou hast hated: and I will gather them together against thee on every side, and will discover thy shame in their sight; and they shall see all thy nakedness." Ezech. xvi, 37.

3. The *personal appearance*, by which on earth he made a show and played the hypocrite, will be disclosed at the Last Judgment as a mask of his inward rottenness.

Other incongruities will be adjusted:

II. By the *separation* of the Just and Unjust.

1. Quite a *new* discrimination will be made, where nothing is taken into account but the consideration, whether you are an impure brute or an innocent lamb.

2. A *heart-rending* separation, when the child will be separated from its parents, the pastor from his flock, etc., not for a time but *for ever!*

3. An *ignominious* separation. We are very susceptible, when somebody is preferred to us, etc. How will the sinner be grieved, when the ignorant Christian, the common laborer, the despised penitent are elevated to the heights of heaven, whilst the honored and learned sinner, the master laden with a curse, stand trembling before the judge. "And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting." Mt. xxv, 46. This separation will remain for ever.

*Peroration:* What thoughts came into your mind during this meditation? What resolution did you make? What have been, and must be, your resolutions? You know your faults and vices. Forsake them! I repeat to you the conclusion of the admonitions made by Moses to his people: "Behold, I set forth in your sight this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, a curse, if you revolt from the way," etc. Deut. xi, 26.

Massillon.

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## II.

## THE JOYS OF THE JUST AT THE LAST JUDGMENT.

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"For you are dead, and your life is hidden for Christ in God. When Christ shall appear who is your life; then shall you also appear with Him in glory." Col. iii, 3, 4. We are accustomed to consider the day of the Last Judgment as a day of

terror, which it is indeed. We should, however, not overlook what there is joyful and consoling in the meditation. Jesus Christ himself exhorts us to look forward to this day of reckoning with a joyful heart. "When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand." Lk. xxi, 28. "When Christ shall appear who is your life, says the Apostle, then shall you also appear with him in glory." It is from this joyful and consoling view that we are this time to meditate on the Last Day, beholding the Just in their exceeding great joy on account of the glory of their body, the sight of Jesus Christ, and their honor before the whole earth.

## PART I.

### THE JUST WILL REJOICE EXCEEDINGLY AT THE GLORY OF THEIR BODIES.

1. At the hour of death the soul departs from her companion, the body, with bitter awe and anguish. Is the body to sleep in dust forever? It cannot be. The body was the splendid garment of the soul, of the same form as the body of Jesus Christ, and nourished and strengthened by this same divine body. Besides, the human soul longs for reunion with her body, without which her beatitude will not be complete.

2. Our holy religion teaches the resurrection of the body. The prophet beheld this resurrection in a vision. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and brought me forth in the spirit of the Lord, and sat me down in the midst of a plain that was full of bones. And He led me about through them on every side: now they were very many on the face of the plain; and they were exceedingly dry. And He said to me: Son of man, dost thou think, these bones shall live? And I answered: O Lord God, Thou knowest. And He said to me: Prophesy concerning these bones, and say to them: Ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord."—"And I prophesied as He had commanded me: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a commotion; and the bones came together, each one to its joint. And I saw, and behold, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin was stretched out over them." Ezech. xxxvii, 1–4; 7–8. "The

hour cometh, says our Saviour, when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they that have done good, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." John v, 29.

3. How great will be the joy of the just soul, when hearing the trumpets summoning the judgment. At last her longing for her old friend and companion is fulfilled. There her body appears, bright and shining like the glorified body of Jesus Christ on Tabor, which was encompassed with light. "The body is sown in corruption; it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory; it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown an animal body, it shall rise a spiritual body." I Cor. xv, 22–44. "Then shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." Mt. xiii, 43.

We shall all arise, but not all shall be glorified. He who desires to rise from the grave with a glorified body, must have buried a body that was not contaminated with sin. In the light of resurrection the sin of impurity, especially, will appear in its entire hideousness. "Fly fornication. Every sin that man doeth is without the body: but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body. Or know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost?" I Cor. vi, 18. "He that soweth in his flesh, of the flesh also shall reap corruption." Gal. vi, 8.

## PART II.

### THEY WILL REJOICE AT THE SIGHT OF JESUS.

1. The Lord says that the angels will gather the Elect from the four parts of the world, and Joel the prophet seems to name the valley of Josaphat as the place of the Last Judgment. "Let the nations come up into the valley of Josaphat: for there I will sit to judge all nations round about." iii, 12.

2. When the nations of the earth are flocked together, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and in the clouds, with great power and majesty, the Saviour will descend. He will suddenly be in sight, "as the lightning that cometh out of the east, and appeareth even unto the west." Mt. xxiv, 27.

3. Then all generations shall lament on earth. The Lord had invited them to partake of the fruits of redemption, had invited them even at the eleventh hour. They all will weep and lament in anticipation of the horrible sentence which is to be passed over them.

4. But the Elect, clad in the splendour of a glorified body, will rejoice at the sight of the Son of God clad in the same glorified body. How exceedingly great their joy will be, we may judge by these considerations:

*a.* The desire of the Elect to behold Jesus is very great; consequently the joy of seeing their desire fulfilled will be very great also. Patriarchs, prophets, and kings had desired to see the Saviour. When the sacred body was in the sepulchre, the Apostles and pious women came to visit it. When this divine body is exposed for adoration on our altars, the faithful flock together around it, though being hidden under the white veil of the species. This Jesus will now come. * * *

*b.* This kind Jesus will be their judge, wherefore they are sure of being received into heaven. When He is to open His mouth, they know He will say to them: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Mt. xxv, 34.

Human greatness and the illusion of human pride, etc., will be humbled by Him who invited us to be meek and humble of heart. "And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the rich men, and the strong men * * * hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains. And they say to the mountains and to the rocks: Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." Apoc. vi, 15, 16.

PART III.

THE JUST WILL BE HONORED BEFORE THE WHOLE WORLD.

1. The life of the Elect upon earth is hidden, and their virtue unnoticed. Their life should be "hidden with Christ in God."—Moreover, their life is an object of hatred to the world. "You shall be hated by all men for my name's sake." Lk. xxi,

17; Cf. I Cor. iv, 10, 13. Is virtue to be hidden evermore? It cannot be. "There is nothing hid, that shall not be revealed, nor secret that shall not be known." Mt. x, 26; Cf. Wisd. v, 1–5.

2. What shall be the honour to be conferred upon the Elect before the whole world?

*a.* The Lord will introduce them to the whole world as His friends. Come ye, he says to them, from all parts of the earth, ye who were unknown, despised, cast out by the world, come, that all generations may learn your greatness and glory, etc.

*b.* The Just will judge their enemies and the whole world, "Know you not that the Saints shall judge this world? * * * Know you not that we shall judge angels?" I Cor. vi, 2, 3; Cf. Mt. xix, 38–30.

*c.* After the sentence is passed, the Saints "shall be caught up with them (the deceased) in the clouds, to meet Christ in the air, and so shall we be always with the Lord." I Thess. iv, 16.

*Peroration:* "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be made rich; and mayest be clothed in white garments, that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear, etc." Apoc. iii, 18. Poor, naked and wretched will appear at the Last Day all those in whom the Judge finds no good works to reveal. Be intent then upon preparing good works. Else your decisive sentence will be: "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devils and his angels." Far from us be such dreadful sentence! May our lives be marked with so many charitable works, that our continual consolation, while yet on earth, may be the hope of hearing the sentence: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, and possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Mt. xxv, 34.

Joseph Ehrler.

## All-Saints.

### I.
### THE VENERATION OF THE SAINTS.

"Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, because your reward is very great in heaven." Mt. v, 12. Magnificent and wonderful is the canopy of heaven, with its bright stars sown by the hand of the Almighty in those endless spaces. "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands." How much greater would be our amazement, were the entire magnificence of this starry sky disclosed to our eyes! But there are yet countless sidereal bodies invisible to our eyes. Brighter, infinitely brighter, however, is the heaven expanded to-day before our eyes, where the Saints of God, "the great multitude, which no man could number," of all nations and tribes (Apoc. vii, 9) surround the throne of the Lamb, like so many stars revolving round the sun. Verily, All-Saints Day is most consoling to the Christian heart. None of the Saints are excluded from our veneration. And we venerate them, because they are Saints, God's friends and our models.

#### PART I.

#### WE VENERATE THE SAINTS ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR SANCTITY.

1. Honor to whom honor is due, is a generally adopted principle. The names of great scholars and artists, of great statesmen and warriors, are kept in veneration; monuments are erected to perpetuate their merits. And if the world exalts its heroes, should the Church be so ungrateful as to forget those who, by their heroic virtues and charitable works, were a spectacle for men and angels?

2. Behold the ranks of the Saints, if they be not worthy of our deep regard and love. There are the Patriarchs, those venerable men, conspicuous for their confidence in God, and hope for the Saviour to come, in the midst of idolaters. There are the prophets of the Old Covenant, through whom God's Holy

Spirit announced the coming of the Messia. There are the twelve Apostles upon whom the Holy Church was founded, who went into the whole world as heralds of truth and grace. We behold with profound admiration the countless multitude of Martyrs arrayed in their blood-stained garments, the tender Virgins—the lilies in the garden of Christ—the Confessors and Fathers of the Church—the shining stars in the heaven of faith. More than all the Saints, we honor the Queen of heaven and earth, through whom salvation is come to us. As long as there are men who esteem virtue and holiness, the Saints will he the object of their admiration.

## PART II.

### WE HONOR THE FRIENDS OF GOD.

Another motive, proceeding from the deepest depths of religion and faith, which instigates us to hold the Saints in veneration, is their intimate friendship with God.

1. The Saints have been God's favorite children on earth, when He laid the foundation of the earth, out of millions He selected His Saints to be pillars of His kingdom on earth. He gave them a greater measure of grace, and as they faithfully cooperated with His grace, He wrought signs and miracles through them, and, by means of their relics, performed miracles so conspicuous and beyond doubt, that even infidels must wonder at such proofs of the power of the Almighty.

Therefore, if we refuse to hold virtue in honor, we should nevertheless be obliged to venerate the Saints on the ground of their having been set forth in an especial manner as God's friends. "You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you." John xv, 14. "If any man minister to Me, him will My Father honour." xii, 26. Does not the Lord say, "that the just shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity." Dan. xii, 3. "Thou hast made us to our God a kingdom, and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." Apoc. v, 10. Whatever God does we, being His children, should do also: for, He is our Perfect model, and we cannot obtain salvation but by imitating Him.

2. God especially commands us to honor His friends. "He that despiseth you, despiseth Me, and Him that sent Me." Lk. x, 16. If our Saviour demands our veneration of the Saints, while in feeble flesh on earth, is not this command more urgent after His friends are arrayed in the light of glory? Every proof of charity towards the least of His brethren is considered by the Lord as being done unto Himself: could He be indifferent to our demeanor towards the princes of His kingdom?

But does not the veneration of the Saints involve a retrenchment of the honor due to God? The truth is that the honor of God is increased, because God by His grace and mercy has made them Saints, and imparted to them their glory by His own free will. Experience teaches us that those who venerate the Saints are most anxious to honor God, and that those who refuse to pay homage to the Saints, refuse to pay homage to God also.

### PART III.

### WE HONOR THE SAINTS, BECAUSE THEY ARE THE MODELS OF OUR LIFE.

The most beneficial ground for the veneration of the Saints is the great influence derived therefrom on our morals.

1. Who is ignorant of the power of example? It is the visible, palpable word. The statues of heroes were erected on the public places of Athens and Rome, to spur the youth to meditation.

2. It is true, Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, is our supreme model. But His light and splendor as being that of God's Son might blind our eyes and terrify our souls, whilst the Saints appear as our equals. They repeat to us the words of St. Paul: "I beseech you, be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ." I Cor. iv, 16. They were in the same feeble flesh, subject to the same temptations of pride, lust and avarice. To them the words of the Holy Ghost applies: "He that could have transgressed, and hath not transgressed; and could do evil things, and hath not done them." Eccles. xxxi, 10.

3. Now we have no longer an excuse for our negligence and self-delusion, as though we could gain heaven in a state of

life different from ours. The example of the Saints destroys this illusion. The Holy Church represents to us Saints of every condition and state of life: holy monks and hermits, holy mechanics and men of letters, holy kings and subjects, holy soldiers and artisans, holy virgins and women, holy children and aged men, such who once were great sinners.

*Peroration:* The Saints of God fought their fight under the standard of the Cross, with the weapons of faith. Their nourishment was the word of God and the graces of the Holy Sacraments. These fountains of grace are still streaming out of the Sacred Heart of the Lord, opened on the Cross to be for evermore the source of salvation for the whole world. "God is able to make all grace abound in you, that ye always may abound in every good work." By means of this grace the Saints have obtained their crown of heaven. As the sea-faring man on the stormy sea lifts his eyes to the stars of heaven, so let us lift up our eyes to the Saints of heaven to be our guides. By paying homage to the Saints, let us gain their and our Lord's affections, and by following their example, let us strive for life everlasting.

Joseph Ehrler.

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## II.

## JOYS OF THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.

"Great rewards cannot be acquired but by great efforts." St. Gregory. All-Saints Day reminds us of the everlasting rewards in store for us; and to-day's Gospel makes known to us the efforts we have to make in order to obtain these rewards. That we may follow the Saints in their rough path leading to heaven, I am to call your attention to the rewards God hath prepared for them. Though of their greatness it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive, and the words of St. Thomas Aquinas to his sister, when asking wherein the glory of heaven consisted, "O sister, before you be received into heaven yourself, you will not be able to comprehend it," are perfectly true; we may still "see

through a glass in an obscure manner" (I Cor. xiii, 12), wherein the happiness of the Saints of God consists. It consists:

I. IN THE POSSESSION OF HEAVEN.

Heaven is the most magnificent abode.

When St. Fulgentius saw the splendid churches and palaces in Rome, he exclaimed with admiration: "How beautiful must be the habitation of the Blessed in heaven, since there is so much magnificence on earth?" Truly, we cannot imagine anything more beautiful, more magnificent and gorgeous than the eternal mansions of Celestial Jerusalem as once seen by St. John, and described Apoc. xxi, 10, etc.

II. IN THE VISION AND POSSESSION OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

1. The bodies of the Saints will be glorified in heaven.

*a.* As such they will be no longer fragile, languishing, or declining. For, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more; nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more." Apoc. xxi, 4. For the same reason, the Holy Angels are, by Scripture and sacred art, represented as youthful.

*b.* They will be arrayed in splendor and fragrant with sweet odor. "Then shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." Mt. xiii, 43. Our Lord Jesus Christ "will reform the body of our lowness, made like the body of His glory." Phil. iii, 21.

The bodies of many Saints shed on earth celestial splendor and delightful odor. Such was the case with the body of St. Hilarion, ten months after his decease. The same, according to St. Gregory, occurred at the death of St. Servulus the Beggar, of St. Jerome, of the holy bishop Martin, of St. Philip Neri and others. How much greater will be the splendor of the *glorified* bodies!

2. The joy caused by the vision, and even possession of these resplendent bodies, will be unspeakable.

*a.* Even the sight of terrestrial beauty is often exceedingly charming. Judith was radiant with so great beauty that the

whole army of the Assyrians was captivated by her sight. Moses was, according to Flavius Joseph, such a charming child, that all those seeing him were filled with admiration, and could not look enough on him. If one ray of celestial glory at the transfiguration of his Lord enraptured St. Peter, so that he seemed to forget the earth and all earthly things, how great will be your delight at the sight of so many glorified bodies?

*b.* In this sight and possession you will experience no envy. Those enjoying an inferior degree of glory will heartily rejoice at the greater measure imparted to their brethren, as St. John, the "friend of the bridegroom," rejoiced at hearing the bridegroom's voice, and did not hesitate to say: "He must increase, and I must decrease." John iii, 29. Although the last mentioned joy will not take place before the consummation of all things, yet the Blessed are perfectly happy before that last time in consequence of the joy of their souls.

III. IN THE FULL KNOWLEDGE BY THEIR ENLIGHTENED SOUL.

1. Clear knowledge is the source of great joy, even in regard to earthly things. When the queen of Saba heard the wisdom of Solomon, she exclaimed with admiration: "Blessed are thy men, and blessed are thy servants, who stand before thee always, and hear thy wisdom." III Kings x, 9.

2. How far greater must be the joy of the Saints in the light of profound knowledge that will shine for them in heaven!

*a.* They enjoy a profound, adequate knowledge of all created things, and of the mysteries of religion, as far as it is possible to creatures.

*b.* They know all this without effort, by intuition, while we have to muse over things a considerable time, in order to gain an imperfect knowledge. What sacrifices would a learned man make to acquire so profound a knowledge!

IV. IN MEETING OUR FRIENDS AGAIN.

1. How great is the joy on earth of meeting one another after long separation! "It is enough for me," said Jacob, "if Joseph my son be yet living; I will go and see him, before I die."

Gen. xlv, 28. And when he had seen Joseph, he said: "Now shall I die with joy, because I have seen thy face." xlvi, 30. Who can measure the joy of Jairus and his wife, when Jesus called to life their beloved daughter?

2. In heaven the joy of meeting again be will be much greater.

*a.* We are to meet our dearest friends. Parents will rejoin the children of whom they were bereaved; the obedient son, his beloved father; the modest daughter, her tender mother; etc.

*b.* They will meet in the splendor of heavenly glory, being infinitely happy.

V. IN THE VISION OF GOD.

1. The greatest joy of the Saints of heaven is no doubt the vision and possession of God, who is to them "all in all." I Cor. xv, 28. St. Paul when caught up to the third heaven, would not utter the words which he had heard, because he was not able: "It is not granted to man to utter" them. II Cor. xii, 4. As the joy of seeing, after a long absence, their dearest father again makes loving children not think so much of the presents he has brought them, so the Saints find a greater happiness in than God, in all the other glories, because He is to them all in all.

2. This happiness will never have an end, which is the crown of all heavenly glory. "The just shall go into life everlasting." Mt. xxv, 46.

*Peroration:* When Philip the Macedonian inquired of Demades, the Ambassador of Athens, about the site, beauty and wealth of this celebrated city, the latter made a rough drawing of it, adding the necessary explanations. However imperfect the drawing was, it excited Alexander's admiration for the beautiful city so much that he exclaimed: "This city shall be mine at any price." Would that this imperfect description of Celestial Jerusalem might cause in all of us the vivid desire and the firm resolution: "This city must be mine at any price."

Bernard Kallenbach.

## All-Souls-Day.

### WHAT SHOULD INDUCE US TO ASSIST THE DEPARTED SOULS IN PURGATORY.

Our heart is sad, remembering our departed brethren and sisters, who, having not wholly atoned for their sins, are doomed to suffer in Purgatory, till they have paid the last farthing. Let our sorrow be active! In their burning torments they cry out to us: "Have compassion on me, have compassion on me, at least ye my friends!" Oh! there are so many urgent motives which should induce us to come to their assistance.

I. FOR THE SAKE OF GOD.

1. The great delight God takes in all our charitable acts for the relief of the departed souls. Each of these souls is:

*a.* God's beloved child. It is quite certain that the suffering souls in Purgatory are arrayed in the charms of sanctifying grace, whilst man, when on earth, does not know whether he is worthy of love or hatred. All those wandering on earth are every moment in peril of being deprived of divine grace and becoming children of eternal condemnation. Now if God loves men on earth with a love deeper than a mother's love, how tender will be His affection towards the soul in Purgatory who offend Him no longer, but, being daily more and more purified, become daily more amiable in His sight?

*b.* A bride of Jesus Christ. The affiance has been pledged; the perpetual nuptials cannot yet be celebrated. How ardent is the desire, not only of these loving souls, but also of the Bridegroom Himself, to be united in heavenly love! And how weighty must be the charitable act done unto God Himself, by which you atone for the guilt of these detained souls! "Whenever you deliver a soul from Purgatory, it is as agreeable to Him as if you had delivered Himself from captivity." St. Dionysius.

2. The honor of God, which is promoted.

*a.* Whoever, by his charitable works, delivers a soul out of Purgatory, dispatches to heaven a new adorer who serves God far better than is possible to the devoutest soul on earth.

*b.* These souls delivered from Purgatory by their pure service, give God some satisfaction for the many sins wherewith He is offended by men on earth. They will restore to Him in our name the homage of which we have deprived Him.

II. ON OUR OWN PART.

We ourselves reap the greatest benefits from coming to the assistance of the souls in Purgatory.

*a.* We increase our merits. "Whatever we do for the departed souls with a good intention, becomes meritorious for ourselves, and after death we receive it multiplied a hundred fold." St. Ambrose.

*b.* We make sincere friends for the next world. The poor souls whom we may have assisted, come in return to our assistance in all our necessities, particularly at the hour of death, when they will accompany us into the land of eternity, to intercede for us with our Divine Judge. "The souls delivered from Purgatory pray incessantly for those by whose assistance they were delivered, and the Lord God refuses them nothing." Richard of St. Victor.

III. ON THE PART OF THE DEPARTED SOULS.

1. Their misery. Purgatory is:

*a.* The place of divine justice. Even in this world has God sometimes punished the least sins most severely, how severely will He punish them in the place of his justice!

*b.* The land of penance for the Elect. The Church imposed severe penance on her beloved children on earth, what will God, on the day of justice, require from a soul who, in defiance of the opportunities and graces offered to her, has neglected to give atonement to Divine Justice.

*c.* The place intermediate between hell and heaven. The poor souls are tormented by the neighborhood of hell. For,

Purgatory has its fetters and captivity, its darkness and night, its stings of conscience and remorses, its flames and burning coals; all which is in hell, desperation excepted. They are tormented by the neighborhood of heaven. They stand at the gates of heaven without being able to enter. They seek God with most ardent longing, without finding Him. "Who sees not that a desire not fulfilled is a continued torment?" St. Augustine.

2. The impossibility of delivering themselves. They are no longer able by tears of penance to efface their sins; for them there are no longer sacraments, indulgences, means of grace. "In Purgatory you can work nothing for yourself, but you are there in an utterly passive condition." St. Bernard.

3. The bonds of charity which should extend beyond the grave, and more so the intimate relation of friendship in which we once were to many souls now in Purgatory.

Wiser.

## Anniversary of Church Dedication.

# THE HOUSE OF GOD IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHURCH CATHOLIC.

A building consecrated to Catholic worship of God, however mean its architectural pretensions may be, is conspicuous for its beauty and dignity on account of its relation to the Church Catholic and Apostolic.

### I. IT IS AN IMAGE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT.

1. In its structure.

*a.* The militant church, that is the body of the faithful on earth, is a vast, organized society extending over all the world, indwelt by the Holy Ghost. Therefore the Apostle (I Tim. iii, 15) calls the church of the living God "the house of God." The principal parts of this spiritual edifice correspond with those of ordinary buildings.

The *corner-stone.* This is Jesus Christ her divine founder, with whom all faithful are intimately united by baptism. "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." Ps. cxvii, 22. "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord." Eph. ii, 20.

The *foundation.* This consists of the apostles who propagated the Church, and through whom we received the holy doctrine and sacraments. "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles." L. c.

The *building* erected upon this foundation, are the faithful, the living stones.

*b.* Every Catholic church building is an image of the militant church on earth.

The altar stone represents Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone. The celebrating priest kisses the altar so many times to intimate the tenderest union with Jesus Christ.

The foundation consists of the apostles who in their successors rule the Church.

The building is the whole body of the faithful who in this place pray and supplicate in common.

2. *In its design.*

*a.* The design of the Church Militant is first to preach the doctrine of Jesus Christ. "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mk. xvi, 15. It is in the second place to sanctify men by means of the holy sacraments, for which end Jesus Christ gave His apostles the power to baptize, to forgive sins, to offer up the Holy Sacrifice, and to administer the other holy sacraments.

*b.* The house of God is built for the accomplishment of these objects, the word of God being preached from the pulpit, and since men are sanctified by means of the holy sacraments and the tremendous sacrifice of the New Covenant, the baptismal font, and confessional, and the altar are erected in our churches for these objects.

II. IT IS A PLACE OF HELP AND CONSOLATION WITH REGARD TO THE CHURCH SUFFERING.

1. It is a doctrine of the Faith that there is a Church Suffering consisting of the souls in purgatory,

*a.* Being well founded in Holy Scripture, which speaks of men who shall be saved, "yet so as by fire" (I Cor. iii, 15), and calling it "a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." II Mach. xii, 46.

*b.* Very consoling: our union, charity and mutual assistance reach beyond the grave.

2. The house of God is the centre of our union with the suffering souls.

*a.* Their bodies repose in "*God's acre*" near the Church, (wherever it can be arranged in this way), receiving the prayers of the faithful and expecting the glorious resurrection.

*b.* In the house of God the faithful pray, and the priests offer up the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of the departed. How many are thus daily released, and rendered worthy of the beatific vision!

III. AN IMAGE OF THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

1. It is similar to *Celestial Jerusalem* as beheld by St. John.

Apoc. xxi, 14. The wall of the city had twelve foundations; and in them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The glory and honor of the nations were brought into it; God Himself dwelled in it. The twelve signs seen on the wall for the ceremony of dedication represent the twelve apostles. We who enter the Church are the glory and honor of the nations, because our ancestors were idolaters. God Himself, surrounded and adored by hosts of angels, dwells in our midst. "This is no other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven." Gen. xxviii, 17.

2. It is a *place of repose.* Heaven is the place where, after the laborious day-work of this life, the blessed enjoy the perpetual Sabbath. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: for their works follow them." Apoc. xiv, 15. In a similar way the Church is a place of repose. Keep far off all worldly business and cares. The Christian, weary and tired by one week's labor, should seek repose on this holy ground at the feet of Jesus, should seek strength by receiving bread of angels, and drink out of the fountain of grace.

3. All things in our Churches remind us of heaven: The pictures and statues of the Saints recall to our mind the glorified friends of God in heaven; the sounds of the organ and solemn music remind us of the perpetual praises of the celestial choirs. The ringing of bells is as a voice from heaven. A devout soul passes her happiest moments in church, and has there a foretaste of celestial joys.

*Peroration:* When we duly meditate on all these truths, we may exclaim with the Royal Prophet: "How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord." Ps. lxxxiii, 2. There should be no house visited by us so frequently as the house of God. With the greatest reverence we should enter the church, and dwell therein. "For the place whereon thou standest, is holy ground." Ex. iii, 5. And let this day be to you a day of great joy, in church and under your own roof; "but rejoice in the Lord always." Philip. iv, 4.

Aloys Messmer.

## Consecration of an Altar.

### I.
### THE GREAT DIGNITY OF THE ALTAR.

You have come to-day in great numbers, and with great joy, into this church exquisitely decorated, in order to be witnesses of the tremendous Sacrifice of Mass being offered up the first time on this new altar. And we have urgent reason indeed to thank our Lord for the creation of this altar in our midst; for the altar is venerable for its high dignity.

I. THE HIGH DIGNITY OF THE ALTAR AS A PLACE OF OFFERING.

1. As places of offering, our altars excel far in dignity the altars of the Old Covenant, they being but types of these. A type or figure was the altar of Abel, Noe, Abraham, the altar of incense, and the altar for burnt offerings in the temple, and the altar of propitiation in the sanctuary. What was offered on them, by figures, is offered on our altars, in reality.

2. As places of offering they are as venerable as the Mount of Calvary, and as the cross on which Jesus performed the bloody sacrifice, the same sacrifice being immolated on our altars. It follows (1) that the Holy Church is perfectly right in consecrating the altars with great solemnity, and in holding them in great honor. In olden times the Church went so sar as to forbid public sinners to direct their eyes toward the altar. It follows (2) that the Christians do wrong when showing irreverence to the altars.

II. ITS HIGH DIGNITY AS A SANCTUARY.

Places where God appeared, or men received a great grace of God, were considered henceforward as sanctuaries, as very venerable places. Upon our altars Jesus Christ descends every day, remaining on one of them day and night.

1. Therefore this altar is *more sacred* than all the sanctuaries of the Old Testament. There is no place on earth where God is so wonderfully present as in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Here He is as substantially present as in heaven, whereas He was only present by signs in the burning bush, the pillar of clouds, on Sinai, in the Schechinah. Are we then allowed to show less reverence to the altar than Moses showed to the burning bush?

2. From it are bestowed more graces than from all other sanctuaries of the New Covenant. It is from the altar that the holy sacraments are dispensed, persons dedicated to God receive their dignity. Through the Most Blessed Sacrament all sacred shrines receive their blessings. Or could anybody doubt to find gracewhere Jesus Christ is personally on the altar?

Let us then make the firm resolution to hold in great reverence our altar, and to regard it as our refuge in all necessities.

M. Unger.

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## II.

## MANNER OF PREPARING THE ALTAR FOR THE HOLY SACRIFICE.

The altar, destined and consecrated for the immolation of the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, is a very venerable place. Accordingly, the Holy Church commands that the altar should be kept in veneration by us also, particularly that it should be well prepared for the celebration of Holy Mass. Hoping thus to confer a spiritual good on you, I will explain the manner of preparing the altar.

1. The first requirement is the *altar-stone.* It is not allowed to say Holy Mass except upon an altar-stone. This stone is consecrated by the bishop, and signifies Jesus Christ the first cornerstone of the Church.

2. *Linen cloth.* The altar should be covered with three clean linen cloths. They remind us of the linen cloths in which Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus bound the body of Jesus, and exhort us to prepare a worthy abode for Jesus at Holy Communion.

3. The *crucifix.* It is placed in the middle of the altar,

and should be sufficiently large to be distinctly seen. It reminds us of the death of Jesus on Golgotha, of the grievousness of our sins, of the wonders of divine charity, and of the truth that the sacrifice of Mass and the sacrifice on the Cross are one and the same sacrifice. Priest and laity should frequently turn their eyes to the Crucifix.

4. The *wax candles.* At least two wax candles should be lighted at Holy Mass. Besides reminding of the early times of Christendom, when the Christians were obliged to celebrate the holy mysteries in the catacombs at candle light, they are significative of Jesus Christ the light of the world, the sun of justice, and of His infinite charity, which urged Him to die for our salvation, as the candle is consumed by fire. Moreover, they call to our mind the joy at the birth of the Saviour and our eternal home, Celestial Jerusalem, which "needeth not sun nor moon to shine in it, for the glory of God hath enlightened it: and the Lamb is the lamp thereof." Apoc. xxi, 23. They must be *wax* candles, because this is such a noble product in God's household; and, for its purity, signifies the virginal body of the Blessed Virgin, of which the Holy Ghost formed the most sacred body of Jesus Christ. These wax candles are a continual exhortation for us to walk in the light of faith, "honestly as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy" (Rom. xiii, 13); and to "let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven." Mt. v, 16.

*Peroration:* You are convinced that you have strong motives to provide for a due adornment of our altars. Thus you partake of the blessed occupation of Mary and Joseph in their temporal life. A well ornamented altar is one of the most beautiful adornments of the church, next to a pious, devout and zealous congregation. What beauty can equal the beauty of an altar, when surrounded by pious and chaste souls?

M. Unger.

## Dedication of a Cemetery.

### I.
### WHY AND HOW THE CEMETERY IS BLESSED.

We have selected a new place for a new cemetery, where many of us are to await the resurrection from the dead. Now we are to dedicate this place to the honor of God, that by the blessing of the Church it may become more venerable. On what else but the ceremony of blessing the cemetery could I speak to you on this occasion? Let me then explain why and how the cemetery is blessed.

#### I. WHY THE CEMETERY IS BLESSED.

The cemetery is blessed, because it is to be the place of repose for the bodies of the Christians sanctified by the holy sacraments.

1. In blessing this place the Church acts in accord with the revelation of the Old and New Testament. God, who formed man of the slime of the earth, pronounced the sentence against him that he should return to the earth out of which he was taken. The Church complies with the divine commandment when she bids the burial, not the cremation, of the bodies. And by selecting a common place for all corpses of a community, she follows the example of Abraham who purchased a burying place for himself and his offspring. Tobias bade his son to bury his mother at his side. In the New Testament the Church has been taught the more to honor the burying place, become by condescending to be buried Himself, Jesus Christ sanctified the usage of burying the dead in the earth, thus sanctifying the earth itself.

2. Moreover, the Church is justified by the custom of the early Christians. They were solicitous to bury the brethren and sisters of Jesus Christ in a place becoming their dignity. Particular care was exercised in gathering the remains of the martyrs. In burying their dead the Christians were exposed to many dangers. They concealed their cemeteries and celebrated

in them the divine mysteries. In later times our Holy Mother, the Church, never neglected the resting places of her departed children.

3. The destiny of the cemeteries caused the solicitude of the Church with regard to them. There the dead bodies await the resurrection. If the bodies of Christians are worthy of our reverence on account of their future resurrection, is it not right that the place where they are deposited for a time, should be honored and blessed, thus being rendered a sacred place?

II. HOW THE CEMETERY IS BLESSED.

By significant ceremonies and edifying prayers.

1. On the eve of dedication *a cross* is planted on the place to be blessed, and before it a stake with three points. What does this cross intimate? It reminds us of the truth that Jesus Christ, who was taken down from the Cross and placed in the sepulchre, is our only hope; through Whom we shall rise from the grave. Thus the Cross exhorts us to put our trust in Jesus.

2. On the day of dedication *three candles* are put on the stake, to remind us of Jesus being the truth, light, and life. To come to Him, we must shun the darkness of sin, and walk in the light of virtue.

3. Thereupon the Litany of the Saints is recited, to implore their intercession in favor of all those who are to repose in the new cemetery. We are reminded, besides, of the Communion of Saints.

4. By the Holy Water and incense it is intimated, that the souls in purgatory are under the justice of the Lord, and that we are able to come to their succour.

5. At last, the three candles are placed on the ends of the Cross in remembrance of the Last Judgment, when the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in heaven. Oh! that on the dreadful day all those who are to be buried here might appear in the glory of Christ Jesus.

Xavier Massl.

## II.

## EXPLANATION OF THE CEREMONIES.

A most affecting ceremony has convoked us on this place of death and corruption as well as of our resurrection. The place of our burial is blessed amidst the ceremonies and prayers of the Church. That the Holy Church prepares a resting-place for our bodies, sanctified in so many ways, needs no apology; and that she blesses this place amidst prayers and significant signs, no one will find surprising. The deep meaning, however, of the different ceremonies as used at this occasion, may be unknown to many. Let me expound it to you.

I. The Holy Water, mixed with Ashes, Salt and Wine. The whole cemetery is sprinkled with Holy Water, to which ashes, salt and wine are added.

1. The *water* with its cleansing, healing, and sanctifying, effects reminds us of divine grace, which came to us from heaven through Jesus Christ, and saved us from starvation, healing and sanctifying our souls.

2. The *ashes* are the symbol of death, reminding us of the fall of our first parents, of the consummation of all things, and of the Last Judgment. On that dreadful day the elements melt, the earth will be destroyed by fire. Ashes exhort us to penance.

3. The *salt* is the symbol of health, and of our soul. It reminds us of immortality, of our redemption, and of virtue.

4. The blessed *wine*, the most strengthening product, reminds us of divine blessing, of the fountain of all blessings, Jesus Christ, the true Vine, and of the advantages of earthly afflictions.

II. The lighted candles.

1. They remind us of divine mercy, through which a light rose from above, when we sat in the shadow of death. Jesus Christ is this light: He is the sun of spirits, the source of light and warmth.

2. Moreover, they exhort us to lead a Christian, virtuous, life. Sin shuns the light; virtue seeks it. The Christian is

called upon to be the light of the world. For this reason, at his baptism a candle was lighted, and he was exhorted to remain faithful to the heavenly bridegroom, that when he comes, he may find him worthy of entering the nuptial hall.

III. *The Incense.*

1. It reminds us of the *vanity* of all earthly things, especially of the fortune of the wicked. "As smoke vanished, so let them (the enemies of God) vanish away; as wax melted before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." Ps. lxvii, 3.

2. It reminds us of the *prayer* of the Saints, being, as it were, a delicious odour before God, refreshing to the souls in purgatory, and advantageous to the sinner. By the *ascending* of the incense, we are exhorted to send incessantly our prayers up to God for ourselves and our brethren.

IV. The Cross of Jesus Christ.

1. The cross in the cemetery reminds us of the necessity of sufferings and death in consequence of sin. If God has not spared his only-begotten Son, we cannot expect that He should spare us. Let us submit to this necessity imposed upon all the children of Adam.

2. It reminds us of the necessity of shunning sin, which has brought so great evils and death itself upon mankind. Sin has been atoned for on the Cross. Therefore the sign of the Son of Man is planted in the midst of the dead to be a warning for the living.

3. It reminds us of life everlasting. On the Cross Christ has gained the victory. It is His triumphal emblem, and the key of heaven. And therefore it is planted on each grave as the emblem of hope. B. Magel.

## III.
## THE CROSS IN THE CEMETERY.

The Cross, the sign of Redemption, meets our eyes everywhere, and everywhere it is to us an object of veneration. To us who are anxious to be saved, the preaching of the Cross is

"the power of God unto salvation," reminding us at every instance of particular benefits received. And the Cross in the cemetery, of what does it remind us?

The Cross in the cemetery is planted for many purposes.

I. IT SERVES AS A WARNING FOR THE LIVING.

1. The living are reminded of their destiny. Christ had at heart the salvation of our soul all His lifetime, to obtain which He suffered and died. The Cross herefore warns us: Do not bury your hearts in earthly things. Think of the salvation of your soul, for which I have suffered so much.

2. They are reminded of the necessity of doing penance. We have sinned so grievously, that Jesus died on the Cross to atone for our sins. He suffered ineffable pains. Could we expect or even wish not to partake of His great afflictions? Far be it from us! We should join our blood-stained spouse by mortification and penance. We should despise the joys which pass by like the wind, and lay obstacles in our way to heaven. What would it avail us to rest here in the shade of the Cross of Jesus Christ, in the quiet grave, if we had not followed Him in our earthly pilgrimage?

3. The Cross reminds the living of the necessity of patience. Jesus has tasted on the Cross all afflictions suffered in their lifetime by those resting now near the Cross. Reflect on this, and admire the patience of your Saviour. What is your suffering when compared with the sufferings of Jesus Christ? Be ashamed of your impatience. Do not leave this cemetery before making the firm resolution to persevere in patience with your Lord and Master.

II. IT GIVES STRENGTH IN THE HOUR OF NEED.

Who is the man that would not fear death and tremble at its approach? Yet we have reason enough to be of good cheer: look at the Cross planted in the midst of this "God's acre," and you will find strength for the hour of death.

1. You will find this strength in consequence of the hope of having obtained forgiveness of your sins. Jesus has suffered for all, taking upon Himself the sins of all. For this reason the agonizing soul must have an unlimited confidence in Christ.

2. And now, in the days of health, let us put our confidence in Him by hoping for His assistance, especially at the hour of death. The devil makes all efforts to obtain possession of the struggling soul before it be too late. It would be an easy task for the devil, unless the dying would seek salvation in the Cross. But the aspect of the crucified Saviour is to the Christian a shield against the attacks of the enemy; it diminishes the combat, and strengthens him, since he is convinced that Jesus is more intent upon our salvation than the devil is intent upon our perdition.

III. IT IS A CONSOLATION TO THE DEAD.

How miserable and wretched would be our life, if with death all were over, or if in the flames of purgatory no one came to our succour? But the Cross teaches

1. That we are to live after death. For He who was crucified has conquered death; He is risen Himself, and assures us that He is our Ressurrection and Life. The Cross is the emblem of victory over the graves of the faithful.

2. The Cross in the cemetery gives us the consolation that we shall not be forsaken and left helpless in purgatory. For it reminds our friends to pray for our departed souls.

3. The Cross gives us hope of a glorious resurrection. For on the Last Day it will appear as the sign of the Son of Man.

Xavier Massl.

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